

SD

STRANGE DAZE

Issue 17

SPRING

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"I live from one tentative conclusion to the next, thinking each one is final. The only thing I know for sure is that I am confused....."

Hugh Prather

UFOs & SANITY

THE BIG GREY MAN
OF BEN MACDHUI

ELECTRO-
MAGNETIC
POLLUTION

Sleep states &
abduction Near death
experience Roswell
Russian style Science
from
Newton

PLUS:

Bill Rose
Kate Taylor
Philip Mantle
Andy Roberts
Albert Budden
Jenny Randles

PLUS!

"OTHERWORLD REALITY" - THE Conference for the Millenium - Reviewed

editorial

Chasing Moonbeams, Angels and Aliens,

I would like to welcome readers to a new look Strange Daze. As we approach the millennium it is my intention to reach out and explore other issues that are arising with the increasing interest in mystery and all things that are perceived to be extraordinary. Strange Daze will be looking at specific areas in depth and I hope to invite new writers and research into exploring and addressing some of these important issues in addition to the excellent writers who have contributed to SD over the last five years. I would like to enter into the world of extraordinary human experiences and what they could possibly mean in terms of the human consciousness and beyond.



Over the years that I have been involved in UFO investigation and research, I have come to the personal conclusion that UFOlogy encompasses a whole area of events that incorporate many mysteries including ghosts, visions, near death experiences, time warps, alien encounters and all manner of remarkable and inexplicable phenomena. This has resulted in a very mixed bag of reports, some of which, on the surface at least, appear to have nothing to do with UFOs and much more to do with human issues and possibly our failure to understand the implications of these elusive and apparently unconnected experiences. We have an iceberg of information, which is melting fast and with much ado and focus on claims of UFO and alien encounters, this raises compelling questions and asks whether close encounter experiences have anything to do with extraterrestrial visitation or belong very firmly in the paranormal field of study, folklore and mysticism. Indeed have the angels and demons of yesterday become the grey aliens of today and the folklore of tomorrow? Just what is going on and what is this really all about? With ever powerful and pervasive imagery at an all time high, are we defining extraordinary experiences within these images that we see in order to try and explain them?

Media exploitation of the witnesses together with their use of much of our research in order to entertain the public rather than inform them is dragging us through very muddled waters indeed. We are also looking at a different way of viewing these puzzling events as people and our advanced technology become ever inexorably linked. As we look to the skies and assimilate endless information from the Internet, the media and all the books, magazines and programmes addressing these issues, each with their very own theories, this can sometimes prevent the public and researchers from having to search for answers. Why look for answers when we can shape our perceptions of these curious events with the imagery now so readily available to us. In our quest, we must go beyond the image makers and attempt to search for the answers with an open mind taking on board the scientific areas that will and can be so revealing in learning about ourselves and the human consciousness.

We need to be able to address the nature of these baffling and mysterious phenomena, but isolate the real mysteries from those that can be explained within the correct resources and scientific disciplines. Strange Daze will endeavour to set out the parameters of extraordinary phenomena and address the real mysteries in a coherent and objective way in order for our readers to present their comments and thoughts on all of these issues, because at the heart of these mysteries lies the meaning of life itself. Roger Penrose, the British Physicist in his best selling book 'The Emperor's New Mind', looked at the vast panorama of modern science and asserted that for all its power and richness this knowledge could not possibly account for the ultimate mystery of existence.... *the human consciousness.*

I have come to the personal conclusion that UFOlogy encompasses a whole area of events that incorporate many mysteries including ghosts, visions, near death experiences, time warps, alien encounters and all manner of inexplicable events and sightings.

To conclude this first editorial, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Dave Newton, a friend and colleague, for passing the editor's chair over to me. I have contributed to Strange Daze since its inception in 1993 and have seen how it has evolved over the years into a balanced and objective magazine with many touches of Dave's irreverent humour to lighten the load in this sometimes belief driven and very unbalanced subject matter. Fortunately, Dave will still be contributing regularly to Strange Daze in the science and astronomy chair, finally returning to his real interest far from the maddening UFO crowd.

I look forward to working with our editorial team, consultants and contributors and I would like to express my sincere thanks to Paul Cabby for his dedicated work on design and layout of this magazine. However, I look forward most of all to contact with our readers, because it is with you, the readers, that everything becomes possible.

Please feel free to contact me via email, snail mail or telephone with your thoughts, comments and criticisms.

Gloria Heather Dixon

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THE ELECTROMAGNETIC POLLUTION APPROACH: BACKGROUND AND BASICS

Albert Budden.

I have been repeatedly asked to put together an article that rounds up all of the relevant aspects of the EM pollution approach in simple, easy to understand terms. It has become clear that those people with no scientific knowledge whatsoever may not be able to appreciate much of the evidence and material I have collated in my recently published magnum opus-"ELECTRIC UFOs-Fireballs, Electromagnetics and Abnormal States". (Pub. Blandford) This article represents just such a round-up, but instead of systematically working my way through and setting out a blueprint, where every relevant point is referenced and supported by scientific monographs, which is what I have done in my book, I will attempt to interest readers by taking a more generalised outlook, and cover various background aspects, such as describing what has happened at some of the investigations I have carried out.

Perhaps by taking this more general and anecdotal approach, as opposed to presenting the results of published studies, more people will tune in to what I am getting at exactly, as it is evidently very 'foggy' in the minds of some people.

THE RIGHT MIX.

Basically then, there have to be several factors to coincide before an individual will begin to experience such strange visionary perceptions as alien abductions, out-of-body experiences variation on the first) the appearance of entities of various types and other what are known as formed figure perceptions, e.g. guardian angels or the Virgin Mary. Firstly, the individual must have been living in an EM hot spot for at least several months-such as below or close to power lines (I think of 300 metres as the cut-off point), or close to or at a specific distance from a radio/TV transmitter etc. However, it must be stressed, hot spots on their own mean nothing as they are everywhere. Whilst they are a necessary condition for the visionary events listed above, they are not a sufficient one.

There must also be a specific kind of "electrical history" such as being struck by lightning or a having suffered major electrocution. Such electrical trauma earlier in life induces permanent changes to the body, and sets it up for hypersensitivity to EM fields in later life. Also, very close and prolonged field exposure such as living below power lines for fifteen years, will also enhance field sensitivity, as will getting close to a strange ball of light that swoops down from the sky or electric fireball, otherwise known as a UFO!

Another factor predicted, is the development of food allergies, and/or chemical sensitivity, which goes hand in hand with field sensitivity. Readers with knowledge of holistic medicine may begin to realise that I am predicting the presence of an overall environmental sensitivities syndrome, which includes EM fields, food and chemicals.

College lecturer, Bob Harris, of Richmond College, Surrey, had recently attended one of my lectures, when he learned of a young man in north London who

claimed that he had been contacted by aliens in his bedroom. Bob called me, and together we drove up to Watford, where "the Wizard" as I shall call him, lived. I had never taken anyone on an investigation during a first time visit before, and I just hoped that the factors I predicted in my books and lectures did actually turn up! Although they always did with other cases in the past, it was with a certain nervousness that I read the road map as Bob drove the car, as we closed in on the Wizard's address. We passed under some power lines high over the road, and as a joke I said "Oh, just follow the power lines Bob!" A few minutes later we arrived at the Wizard's address, and there barely 90 metres away were power lines over the electric rails of the train network. I breathed a sigh of relief.

The Wizard was a most unusual young man who had constructed some kind of four foot high healing/free energy device (or so he said) in his parents front room, which seemed to consist of spirals of wire, vials of liquid and many huge quartz crystals, all arranged around three copper rods which formed the tripod on which everything stood. It was a most bizarre thing to find in a conventional neat and tidy front room!

Whilst Bob was marvelling at this, I had used the Trifield meter to detect high electric fields coming from the walls, and higher than usual (normally around 0.5 gauss) background readings of magnetic fields.

I then noticed that the device had a long trailing wire coming from it, which the Wizard explained, was the earth. To demonstrate the available "free" energy, this wire was fixed to a point on a wall by a screw fitting, and to our amazement, small bulbs did actually light up. However, on testing the wall with the Trifield meter, it was clear that it was emitting a substantial electric field of 25 kilovolts per metre! It is common in older houses for the circuitry to have poor insulation when inset into plaster walls, and in this case it seemed that it had deteriorated to a considerable extent. It was clear, however, that this was the source of the Wizard's "free energy".

Bob, not realising that the power lines would be sufficient to affect someone who was electrically hypersensitive (EH) then asked if there were any radio transmitters nearby. "Oh yes" exclaimed the Wizard, and asked us to follow him upstairs. We looked out of his bedroom window and to our astonishment, there right next door was a very tall radio mast erected in the middle of the lawn, with many steel cables attached to keep it upright and stable. I switched the Trifield meter on, but it was not transmitting, and no RF frequencies registered at that time. However, it is between the hours of midnight and 4am that such radio hams receive and transmit, coinciding with when the Wizard was "visited by aliens" in his room.

I was of course relieved to be vindicated regarding the prediction of an EM hot spot. The power lines, railway lines, live and leaking circuitry and the very close and very powerful radio transmitter, which had been there for ten years (the Wizard was 20) was certainly enough to qualify the location as an EM hot spot. But what about a major electrical event? It was interesting to hear the Wizard's account of how, in his early teens, he had been badly burned by a "big electrical accident". Usually, common domestic

contacts with live wires do not really qualify for a major electrical event (MEE), but this certainly seemed to be above average. However, by this time, the Wizard had begun to realise that we were not believers in aliens, and his answers to my questions begun to get evasive. "You think its all temporal lobes, don't you?" he asked. Quite truthfully, I told him that I did not, and that he had developed not only a hypersensitivity to EM fields living where he did all his life, but I suspected that he had food allergies and chemical sensitivities, which is another factor that must coincide with the others for hallucinatory aliens (or other entities) to occur. I held my breath as he considered my predictions. He then told us how he wore an all-over pure cotton "suit" under his normal clothes, as he easily built up painful static discharges from many common fabrics. This was getting interesting, as such sensitivity to fibres was something that was a hallmark of the environmental sensitivity syndrome I was looking for, and is actually predicted in the standard questionnaire I have developed called "The 25 Questions". His next piece of information was even more interesting, as it transpired that he had actually taken a course in holistic medicine and that his diet and general lifestyle followed these principles! Such choices reflect environmental sensitivities, including EH, which are the clinical conditions that produce the visitation experience in its many forms, as predicted in "Electric UFOs" and "Allergies and Aliens". In fact, the cover of this latter title shows three aliens, each bringing chemicals, electricity and food, as symbols of the environmental sensitivities syndrome linked to abduction experiences.

Soon after I had started asking the Wizard of Watford more detailed questions about his sensitivities, he became so evasive in his answers that it became obvious that there was little point in continuing. However I had uncovered enough to make me realise that the basic factors that ran through all of the other cases I had explored (over 50 at that point) were also present with this one. The Wizard had been subjected to RF fields at close range from the transmitter next door for the last ten years of his life. Such irradiation had affected his physiology to the extent that he had spontaneously developed holistic health practices, which is something that experiencers often do after their abduction event. It is an unconscious compensatory measure to counteract the effects of irradiation, such as the development of food allergies. This key aspect in the understanding of these strange experiences is explored at length in "Electric UFOs". As a concluding comment regarding the Wizard of Watford case, I would say that because the Wizard was not "UFO naive" and did actually have a background in UFO matters generally, and therefore "clammed up" fairly early on in the investigation, this case did not reveal the other secondary parameters that are always linked to CE4 events, e.g. the sense of presence, magnetophoshenes, desynchronization etc.

OTHER INVESTIGATORS FIND THE SAME LINKS.

If the pattern I had found really was an objective phenomenon out there implicit in the CE4/3 events themselves, other investigators should also have found it, although they may be unaware of its significance. In fact, I soon learned that this was in fact the case.

CONFIRMATION FROM AMERICA.

Professor Kenneth Ring at the University of Connecticut, USA wrote a book that is generally unavailable in this country, although it is possible to find it through specialist outlets. It is called "The Omega Project" and deals with his studies of near death experiences (NDEs) and alien abduction experiences (CE4s). It is one of the few studies where samples of CE4 experiencers are actually examined first hand, as opposed to the pontifications of the many armchair theorists. In it he describes how, in his studies of CE4 experiencers, he found that such people exhibited an enhanced sensitivity to electricity and EM fields. This was in 1992, two years before my "Allergies and Aliens" was published. Ring also found other sensitivities in his "abductee" samples, and called the overall syndrome "psychological sensitivity". Being a professor of psychology, this was understandable, but essentially, he was detecting the same syndrome that I independently call environmental sensitivity.

In 1994, after reading "Allergies and Aliens", Professor Ring wrote to me and said:

"Fascinating! As I had surmised yesterday, you are really onto something with your thesis, and I myself am inclined to concur with a great deal of what you have to say and suppose about the basis of so-called alien abductions"

Professor Ring has now moved to California, and has just published a new work which deals with near-death experiencers who are blind.

As if this was not enough encouragement, I soon received a letter from the well-known investigator/author, Dr Jacques Vallee in San Francisco, USA, who had also just read "Allergies and Aliens". He wrote:

"Frankly, when I read your book, I was delighted and stunned at the elegance of your approach-and a bit peeved that I hadn't thought of it!" Dr Vallee later also sent me an example of a case that clearly matched the pattern I had found. This is described in "Electric UFOs".

CONFIRMATION FROM CANADA.

Confirmation from Canada came in a very certain and defined way-from someone who believed in the ETH! In the veteran UFO periodical "Flying Saucer Review" (FSR) one Lorne Goldfader, director of the UFO Research Institute of Canada, had written an article which revealed the results of the investigations of UFORIC. It said:

"Over the past four years of intensive research into abduction reports, I have come across what seems to be an extraordinary and most interesting relationship. In almost every abduction case investigated by UFORIC and involving families with either small children, or pregnant mothers, we have discovered the existence of power grids ('Leggo-like' hydroelectric constructions) above or very near to the dwellings...What seems to be a completely new factor is the possibility that we have now established a link between the power grids and actual abductions by UFO"
(FSR. 38(3)1993.)

Goldfader, for some reason, refers to ordinary pylons as "Leggo-like hydroelectric constructions" and power lines as "power grids", but the central message is there-

that his group has found that CE4s occur in EM hot spots.

Before I leave confirmation from Canada and pass onto Australia, Dr David Gotlib, editor of the Bulletin of Anomalous Experiences, wrote after reading "Allergies and Aliens":

"I think you're really onto something here...I hope you will build on this initial work."

CONFIRMATION FROM AUSTRALIA.

After sending a copy of "Allergies and Aliens" to famous Australian ufologist/investigator, Bill Chalker, I received a letter which told me that over 70% of his CE4 cases lived very close to power lines, also reflecting the same pattern found in the UK, USA and Canada.

Incidentally, a book called "The Truth About Alien Abductions" by Peter Hough and Moyshe Kalman, the authors describe a CE4 case that also happens to be right next to power lines, but erroneously dismiss this as insignificant coincidence. As I have said, although the presence of an EM hotspot is an essential parameter of CE4 cases, it is not a sufficient one, and there are a number of other factors that must coincide for the right conditions for the CE4 event (and other visitations) to occur. One of these is a major electrical event, which is instrumental in precipitating electrical hypersensitivity (EH), as this is the clinical condition that facilitates visionary experiences generally.

CHILDHOOD ABUSE.

Another factor that must also coincide, seems to be the incidence of childhood abuse-sexual, violent or emotional. In other words, there must also be a specific psychological profile in place in the experiencer. This is an aspect that is referred to rarely, for obvious reasons, and it is a difficult aspect for investigators to explore. I do cover it in "Electric UFOs", and this factor was also discovered in his CE4 samples by Professor Kenneth Ring, disclosed in his epic "The Omega Project". All I have managed to do regarding my own test enquiries, is to include the simple "Did you have a happy childhood?" as one of "The 25 Questions".

"TIME LAPSE" AMNESIA AND REGRESSION HYPNOSIS.

A frequently occurring characteristic that 'abduction' investigators have documented and explored is the aspect of 'missing time' or 'time lapse' as it has

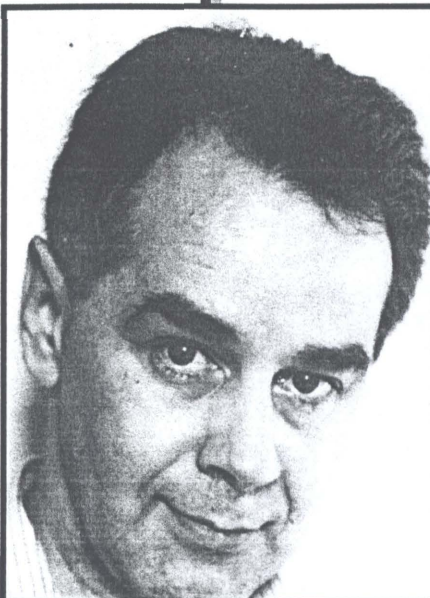
come to be called. Experiencers frequently present accounts which quite evidently, contain a period of time for which they cannot account. A very commonly reported circumstance is where an individual, (or group of individuals) have been driving home during the hours of darkness, encounter an unexplained aerial light close to the car, subsequently undergo puzzling circumstances involving some sort of reality distortion, resume their journey in a dazed and sometimes mute state, and on their return home find that it is an hour or two later than it should be for the journey distance. Investigators, on learning of such cases,

have resorted to regression hypnosis in order to retrieve memories of this 'missing time', which certainly seems to show that they have been abducted by aliens and sometimes subjected to some sort of mysterious bodily tampering, with physical marks on their physique to "prove" it.

Before the value and identification of the information gleaned from such procedures is explored, let us consider why it is that such periods of amnesia occur in the first place. Of course, those who adhere to the idea that it is imposed by aliens upon the unwitting subjects are satisfied with its non-identification, putting it down to the mysterious ability of such intelligence's to manipulate the human mind for their own ends. However, the real reason that experiencers forget what has occurred during this time period is because they have either been unconscious due to the effect of the EM fields emitted by the electric fireball to which they have become quite close, or have during this period undergone a vivid visionary experience. Both states have been frequently observed in reacting EH patients in the Breakspear Hospital (Buckinghamshire, UK) although without the strange and dramatic visual cues provided by close proximity to an electric fireball.

Therefore, the experiencer largely forgets the visionary narrative in the same way that the elusive content details of dreams evaporate so quickly on awakening. Also, just as disjointed fragments of dreams are frequently recalled, often stimulated by some minor event during the day triggering such memories, so experiencers also remember some fleeting aspects of their abduction vision. One of the factors that contributes to this "forgetting", which also applies to dreams, is the fact that there are none of the usual contextual and communication cues

which we use to construct a memory of an objective event. That is to say, in the external mundane world, we can easily recall such events as a visit to the cinema because we know for instance, who suggested the visit, the journey to the cinema, the price of the ticket and perhaps whether we chose popcorn or chocolate etc. We may also have discussed the film content and outing with others afterwards. The experience is firmly placed



ALBERT BUDDEN.

Albert worked for the Scientific Civil Service before obtaining his degree in Education. He went on to teach Biology at advanced Level.

He has been an investigator into UFO and paranormal events for the last 19 years, having presented numerous lectures including three International conferences.

He is author of four books, including his latest, "Electric UFOs-Fireballs, Electromagnetics and Abnormal states", published by Blandford and now into it's second printing after only two months.

Albert is known for developing the Electromagnetic Pollution Approach, as applied to Alien abduction experiences, visitations, "Poltergeist" activity and "haunting" phenomena.

He is presently writing a book on electrical hypersensitivity.

within a completely familiar setting which provides many cues that are easily recalled. However, with both dreams and the abduction vision, all of such mundane contextual cues are entirely absent. The experiencer, with no sense of transition (key phrase that occurs repeatedly in "abduction" accounts) is at one moment staring out at a huge weird light hovering close to the car, which may even appear to resolve into a structured craft with windows, and the next they are plunged into a bizarre vision where they feel paralysed (another well-documented symptom of EH termed akinesia) with weird-looking beings looming over them followed by a range of sensations (tingling, numbness, floating etc) that they have never felt before. And in common with dreams, this may be followed by rapid changes of scene and jumps in reality which cannot be put into any recognisable context. These perceptual conditions are not conducive to accurate recall of the vision because it exists in limbo—a contextual vacuum, where there are no lead-up details for example. Usually, the aerial light and its fluctuating appearance is remembered, and if two or more individuals are involved, it is the only shared aspect that is recalled when the event is described later. This is of course because it is an objective phenomenon (upon which subjective hallucinatory effects may be superimposed) and not the product of the image-banks of the subconscious.

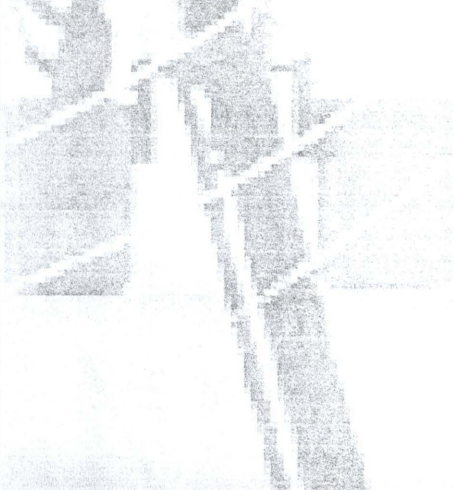
If the content of the abduction vision slips from recall just as the details of dreams evaporate on awakening, what does the frequently well-meaning sessions of regressive hypnosis really disclose? The uncomplicated answer to this is the internally perceived abduction vision, along with any field-induced physical bodily/ neurological sensations that may have been triggered. A comparable experiment would be to hypnotically regress someone from the point where they get into bed for the night, and continue the regression until descriptions of the content of their dreams emerge. That is to say, there is a direct comparison between the abduction vision and the vivid hallucinatory nature of dreams. In fact, in the act of hypnotically regressing experiencers, investigators are in reality, inducing descriptions of an internally originating experience, and then attributing an external and objective status upon it.

Author and experiencer Whitley Strieber, in response to my identification of his EH status, admitted its existence but attempted to over-ride its real significance by assuring us that the aliens he encountered acted autonomously with a will of their own which was quite beyond his initiation. (MUFON Journal.No.324. April:18.1995.) However, this is precisely the quality that make dreams so compelling or disturbing—their autonomous ability to impose realities upon us that are completely outside of our control. That is to say, that they too, spontaneously impose themselves upon us, just as Strieber described the action of his aliens.

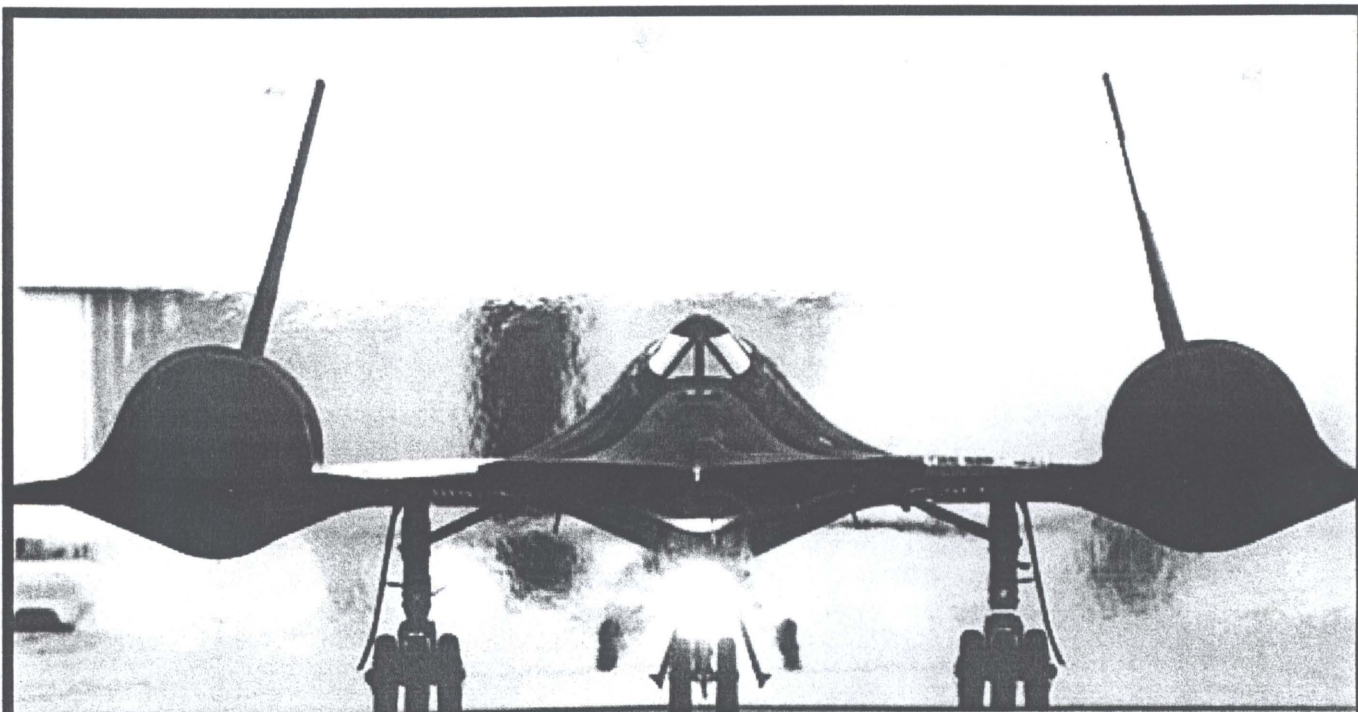
I recall a lecture at a BUFORA meeting in London, given by someone who had enough training to hypnotise a subject, and this can be quite minimal as it is not difficult to do per se. A video of the regressed experiencer was shown, and we could hear the questioning carried out by an investigator. At times, the subject was entirely unresponsive to such questioning, and did not even seem to hear the investigator. In fact, it was clear to me that the subject had reached a period in the regression where he had actually become unconscious and completely oblivious, as opposed to working his way through a description of the internally-originating "abduction" perceptions. Despite requests

from the investigator, at that stage of the experience the "abduction" vision had ceased, and the subject's "mind-screen" had become blank. The ETH-orientated lecturer had no explanation for these totally blank periods in the regression, except to fall back on the usual catch-all: that the aliens had done something mysterious that we could not hope to understand.

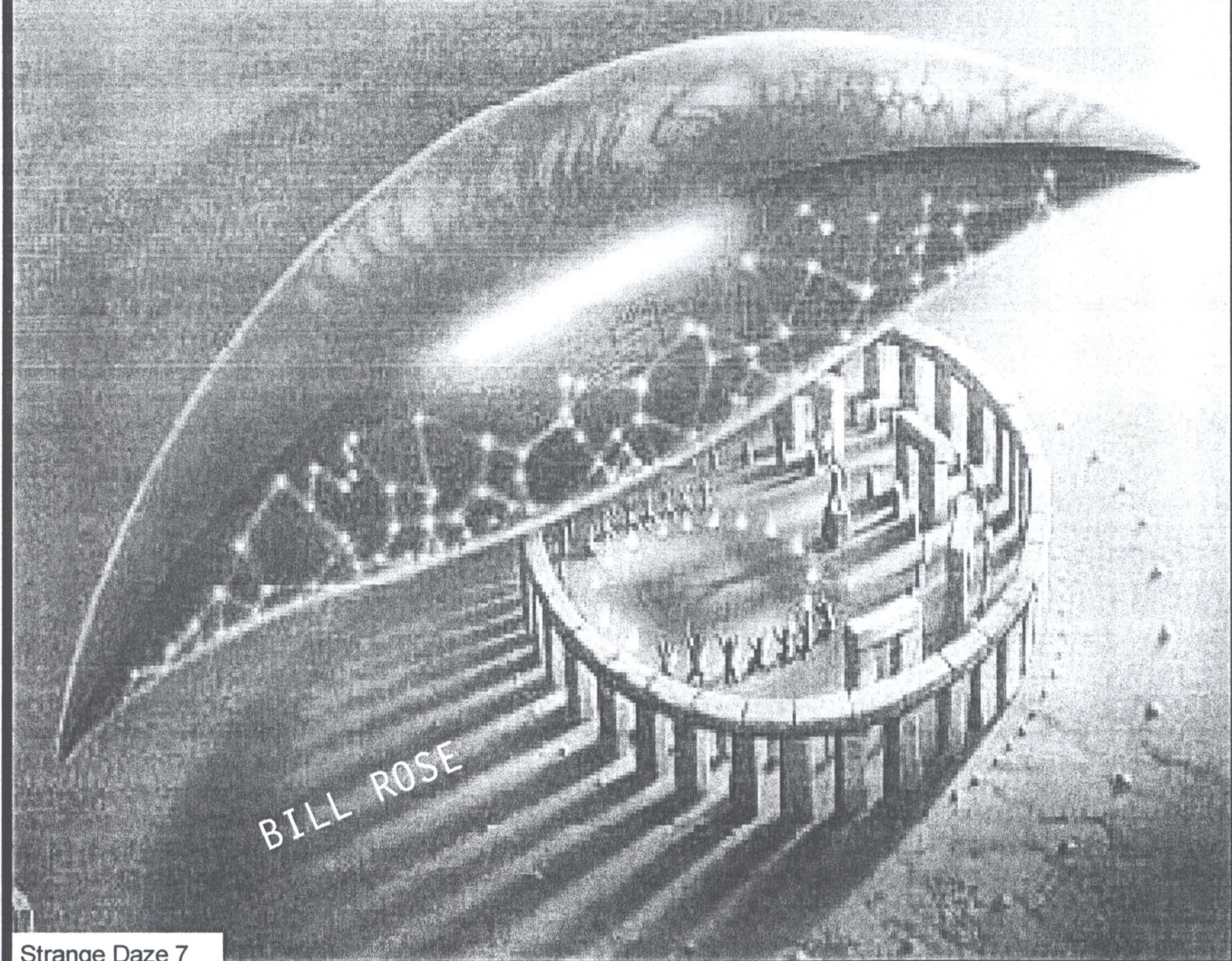
Throughout the quite lengthy video recording, carried out using a ordinary domestic camcorder there had been continuous background static. I asked if the location where the hypnotic regression had taken place, was also the location where the "abduction" event occurred, and was told that it was. I had recognised the characteristic interference or "noise" and "mush" of a radio-transmitter, which registers on video recordings with a tell-tale tone. Following this line of enquiry up, I later learned that the experiencer under regression was a radio ham. There was in fact a powerful RF transmitter actually in the building! Needless to say, such conditions identify the house where the alien abduction experience took place, as an EM hot spot. This was something that was completely lost on the ETH-inspired lecturer when I told him of my conclusions during the interval.



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UFOs- An Attempt to bring Sanity to the Debate



There may be a million intelligent civilisations scattered throughout our galaxy and a recent estimate based on Frank Drake's famous mathematical equation suggests that at least one technological race should exist within a 1000 light year radius of our star system. Advanced extraterrestrials will already possess the means to detect life bearing planets orbiting nearby stars and the ability to visit them, although it seems likely that ultra sophisticated robot probes are the universal tool for long range interstellar exploration. Of course, some highly advanced extraterrestrials may possess a "warp drive" which makes manned interstellar missions a routine undertaking.

Unfortunately, the laws of physics suggest there is no practical way around the "light barrier" and interstellar space may represent a sort of natural quarantine in our widely separated region of the galaxy. On the other hand, manned journeys to nearby stars using ships which are able to reach relativistic velocities are theoretically possible and we can expect to have this capability within the next two or three centuries. Because interstellar travel appears technically feasible, nobody can say with absolute certainty that aliens have never visited the Earth. Nevertheless, there have been no reports of phenomena resembling a "Bussard" ram-scoop or anti-matter powered starship crossing the inner Solar System and the signature of such a craft would be quite evident to most astronomers around the world. In addition, brief scientific surveys connected to SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) programmes have failed to detect any unusual objects parked at the Moon's gravitationally stable Lagrange points or within the Mars-Jupiter asteroid belt. This might appear to rule out the presence of alien robot probes within the Solar System, although perfect stealth would be a feature of any machine that was used to monitor our activities over an extremely long period. In general, scientists are open to the idea of extraterrestrials but insist on solid evidence based on disciplined thinking. Might there be such evidence right under our noses and are the Governments conspiring to cover it up?

CLANDESTINE ACTIVITIES

Abductees often recollect harrowing stories of sexual interference by aliens, which they clearly believe to be true. These tales usually emerge under hypnosis and generally follow a standard pattern, which some ufologists claim to be solid proof of sinister alien activity, perhaps with secret government collusion. But common sense tells us that tens of thousands of ordinary citizens are not being snatched from their beds every night and a range of more realistic explanations must exist. Let's face it, why would advanced aliens need to kidnap so many ordinary people for the purposes of conducting crude and seemingly irrational medical experiments on them? However bizarre the alien's thinking might be, there would be little if any point to such a clumsy undertaking. It also stands to reason that the authorities might turn a blind eye to the

occasional abduction but they couldn't tolerate a major challenge to their authority which would ultimately threaten world security. More realistically, the underlying cause of abduction phenomena has been decades of slow conditioning through casual exposure to televised science fiction and movies like "Close Encounters." This has undoubtedly created the "Greys" which have become the standard alien form in many minds around the world and it's worth mentioning that there were no reports of alien abductions prior to the publication of Betty and Barney Hill's story in the early 1960s. (No doubt, somebody will find an abduction tale which proves me wrong!)

Professional research indicates that many accounts of abduction can be directly attributed to sleep paralysis and minor mental illness. It has also been suggested that some cases may be caused by prolonged exposure to strong electromagnetic fields and the use of certain types of medication. Let's finally consider the fact that there are people who just want to take part in a "real life" sci-fi adventure and will do anything to have their 15 minutes of fame! Of course, some Abductees claim to have been implanted with miniature alien devices and UFO publications regularly carry photographs of extracted macroscopic artifacts. These usually look like splinters to me and I am still waiting to see images from a scanning electron microscope which shows irrefutable evidence of ultra advanced alien technology.

Animal mutilation poses a different set of questions and some ufologists regard this as positive proof of alien bio-experimentation. However, the idea that aliens or secret government agencies are removing animals in the dead of night to experiment on and then returning the bodies to exactly the same location simply defies logic. Why would anyone bother to do this and what would be the point? "Who knows the alien's motives?" Say the true believers!

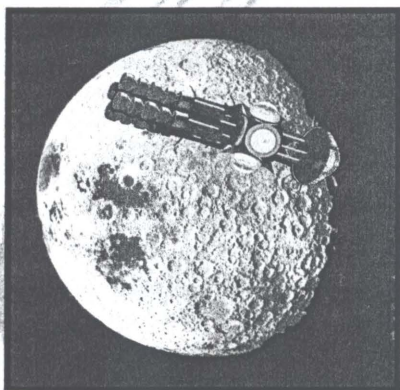
For some time, it was my belief that disturbed individuals were responsible for most of these cases, but recent information suggests the answer is often much simpler. Cattle are surprisingly valuable items and they occasionally die from unknown natural causes. In America, insurance companies do not cover these losses, although there is usually provision made under the heading "vandalism." Alien mutilation apparently fits this category rather nicely and many ranchers have wasted no time exploiting the UFO hypothesis. Ufologists will fall back on the technical skill required to remove parts of an animal's body and quote the use of a laser. May I suggest that readers with a further interest in this grizzly topic should talk to someone in the medical profession who regularly uses Swann Morton disposable scalpels for surgical procedures. Ask them how precisely and quickly it is possible to cut through tissue with one of these basic instruments. The answer may surprise you! Okay, so what about crop circles which used to be described as "saucer nests" when nobody took much notice of them. Surely these provide physical evidence of alien activity? Well, two hoaxers by the names of Doug Bower and Dave Chorley have demonstrated how simple it

is to fool UFO researchers and they have admitted creating many intriguing patterns in corn fields during the course of this decade. Several small groups of hoaxers are still active and if there really is a natural weather phenomena creating some circles, the chances of finding any evidence for it, has become rather slim. Even digital manipulation has been used to produce video footage of corn circle formation and such a muddle has been generated by all this hoaxing, that serious investigation is now largely pointless. Of course, crop circles have substantially enhanced tourism in the areas surrounding Warminster, Wiltshire and I'm sure there are plenty of local publicans and hoteliers who are more than happy to maintain this situation.

So is there any other proof that extraterrestrial agencies are operating on our planet? Well maybe, but first I am going to push aside the question of deadly alien biology entering our environment or deep discussion on whether aliens would be able to exist on our planet. To avoid these awkward complications, let's simply assume that any biological carbon based visitors can avoid spreading deadly plagues, are immune to our bugs, breath air, (or don't need to) cope with our sunlight, handle our gravity and can live with the air pressure. In fact they may even speak English like all the best humanoid aliens in Star Trek!

SEARCHING FOR UFOs

Is there any likelihood that alien spacecraft are operating within our atmosphere? Good quality pictures have been taken of UFOs during the last 50 years and not all of them are flying hub caps, small cut-outs pasted on windows, camera trickery or digital manipulation. Daylight UFOs of the supposed alien variety fall into three main categories, which are, flying saucers, flying triangles and cigars. *Thankfully there are no Borg cubes cruising around yet!* Looking at a typical batch of UFO reports for any given month, it's clear that most can be dismissed as man-made objects,



Author's Impression of Alien Probe

unusual natural phenomena, wishful thinking or intentional deceit. Man-made unidentified

flying objects can be anything from hot air balloons to Boeing 747s, but as a report progresses down the line, the object will often alter out of all recognition. Poor eyewitness accounts of distant passing lights in the night sky quickly become a

threatening alien spacecraft beaming down shafts of energy and the object soon grows to the size of Lord Vader's Death Star! Unusual natural phenomena is reported as evidence of UFO activity and it includes bright planets, meteors and strange weather effects. Earthlights and ball lightning probably account for some of the more unusual sightings and both remain at the fringes of our current scientific knowledge. Unquestionably, the most balanced view of UFOs can be obtained by talking with experienced amateur

astronomers who study the night sky whenever the "seeing" permits. Many will tell you there are plenty of UFOs passing overhead, although these are satellites, aircraft and other objects which simply remain unidentified. What seems to have been forgotten by many UFO enthusiasts is the minor detail that UFO doesn't actually mean AS or Alien Spacecraft!

COVER STORIES

When we focus in on the core of high grade UFO sightings, things become more interesting. At this level, we are usually dealing with impeccable witnesses, good photographs and perhaps physical evidence. Most investigators agree that the major governments are holding back information on UFOs, but what are they actually concealing?

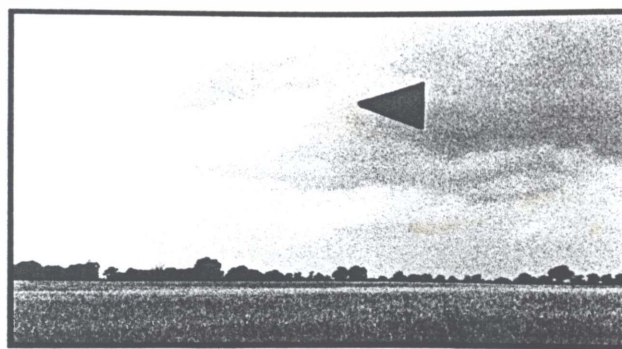
Are the authorities really working with/against alien agencies or is the public's sheep-like belief in E.T used as a long term cover to hide a series of very exotic black budget aviation programmes? According to the highly successful UFO author Nick Pope who ran the MoD's SEC(AS)2a desk at Whitehall, (and is still employed as a well paid civil servant bound by the Official Secrets Act) the unidentified triangular objects which operate within British airspace are extraterrestrial in origin. Pope would have us believe that HMG hasn't a clue where these craft come from or what they're doing. He also wants to convince us that the MoD is totally open about the UFO issue and is holding nothing back. As a cynic, I find this impossible to believe and in my experience, most departments of the British Government are economic with the truth as a matter of routine and will blatantly lie whenever necessary. But don't take my word for it, just ask CND, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, Liberty or the Gulf War Veterans! About a year ago, the CIA claimed that most of the unexplained UFO sightings from the past were actually secret spyplane flights. There is undoubtedly some substance to this, but it doesn't explain the plethora of UFO reports which began in 1947, some nine years before the first squadron of high altitude U-2 spyplanes was deployed. Most of the "good" low altitude postwar UFO sighting involved discs, flying cigars or heel shaped craft, which suggests alien UFOs, or an entirely different generation of secret aerial vehicles.

Surprisingly, there are still some unconventional postwar military aircraft which remain classified perhaps because of their resemblance to UFOs. Is there a long term programme in operation which

encourages the general public to believe there are aliens amongst us and allows

accidental sightings of secret aircraft to be easily debunked? In America, new military aviation programmes continue to be developed in secret, while Congress openly funds combat aircraft projects which ultimately earn billions of overseas dollars and keep millions of US defence workers in full time employment. Maintaining the status quo is vital for all major Governments and information is only allowed to slowly filter down from the black domain to the more visible military programmes. The reasons for this are quite simple. Even if you have flying discs which are 30 years ahead of your latest air superiority fighter, the rapid introduction of leapfrog technology will be very de-stabilising in peacetime. It is also true that experimental prototypes (which work) are often too expensive to put into production or too complex for operational deployment. Furthermore, the moment you unveil a new piece of military technology, every potential adversary with the technical resources will attempt to counteract or duplicate it.

Keeping a number of advanced high-tech weapons in reserve makes a lot of sense and their introduction in a major conflict can often prove decisive. Over the years, this has been demonstrated many times with a range of innovations stretching from the long bow to the atomic bomb. For decades, the Pentagon has operated a policy of keeping its "hottest" aviation programmes under long term wraps (like the F-117A stealth interdictor) and this is a prime reason why the A-17 (possibly FB-119A) supercruise stealth bomber (a newer, larger version of the F-117A) and Boeing's top secret Senior Citizen stealth transport aircraft will stay secret until they are needed in a future crisis situation. Senior Citizen may have come about as direct result of the ill-fated Teheran hostage rescue mission in 1980 and this aircraft's role, is to secretly insert special forces deep within enemy territory. Triangular in shape, the aircraft is believed to be about the same size as a BAe-146 and it probably possesses a VTOL (Vertical Take Off & Landing) capability which is provided by a ducted exhaust system. Conceivably, some of the recent flying triangle sightings above Britain have been A-17s and Senior Citizens on Top Secret semi-operation missions. Two additional secret US visitors to Britain may be a small stealthy manned reconnaissance/strike aircraft called the TR-3A that operates alongside the F-117A and Aurora, which replaced the SR-71 strategic spyplane in 1990. (Latest accounts suggest that Aurora is a variant of the A-17 or YF-23A and not a super exotic spaceplane) Numerous reports indicate there are also a handful of secret British "one-off" prototypes, which range from small manned and unmanned Bae HALO (High Agility, Low Observability) demonstrators to large LTA (lighter than air) triangular vehicles which may be undergoing trials as exotic sensor platforms. By keeping these advanced designs under wraps for as long



as possible, the problems of funding and accountability are dramatically reduced and should a very expensive project go down the pan, nobody is brought to public account. Time wasting review bodies, committees and programme approvals can easily be dispensed with and if you want to conduct operational tests, it's alright, providing you don't make it obvious and don't get caught! In a recent "Focus" magazine article, Nick Pope was asked if one particular UK flying triangle sighting might have been a secret American aircraft.

"Nonsense," he replied. "You do not fly into another nation's airspace, undermining diplomatic relations and risking engagement by that country's air defence network just to try out a shiny new toy. I can tell you, it simply doesn't happen like that."

In fact, this statement is complete garbage. The USAF has a long history of clandestine operations within the UK that carry the full blessing of our government.

Secret USAF/CIA aircraft have flown from UK airfields since the Lockheed U-2A spyplanes were covertly deployed to RAF Lakenheath in 1956. Nick Pope and the MoD would like you to believe otherwise, but the Pentagon has complete access to the airspace of all its allies and classified aircraft are regularly deployed to secure overseas USAF bases on test flights and semi operational missions. Contingency plans exist for accidents on foreign soil and a good example of how the MoD provides full support in such a situation was demonstrated at RAF Boscombe Down during 1994, when a secret US spyplane crash landed on Runway 23. "It was just a Tornado in trouble," said the MoD, after clearing the area, although most aviation correspondents thought otherwise! I have been unable to establish if any DA Notices were issued to the UK media in respect of this particular incident, although the absence of televised reports has been quite apparent.

SEARCHING FOR SAUCERS

There is one issue I must address which is the use of acquired alien technology in secret aircraft. A number of ufologists will claim that

UFOs have capabilities which lie far beyond our scientific knowledge. I can only say that I have found no evidence to support this idea and most reliable eyewitnesses describe low level UFOs as slow moving objects with helicopter performance. In the case of civil and military radar networks,

"Nonsense," he replied. "You do not fly into another nation's airspace, undermining diplomatic relations and risking engagement by that country's air defence network just to try out a shiny new toy. I can tell you, it simply doesn't happen like that."

unidentified returns have been tracked at incredibly high speeds and occasionally seen to zigzag across a display screen. In these cases, the issue of system calibration, reliability and the truthfulness of official sources must definitely be questioned!

Few UFOs actually have an appearance which indicates the use of ultra-sophisticated Trans-atmospheric aerodynamics and suggestions that UFOs can instantly accelerate from rest to beyond Mach 25 indicates faulty electronics rather than the use of alien "inertia-less drive" technology. After many years of investigation, I have concluded that the first flying disc was designed in Germany during 1941 by Rudolph Schriever, who worked for the Heinkel Aircraft Company. As WW11 progressed, there was considerable pressure placed on designers to develop supersonic VTOL interceptors (German airfields were being bombed to hell by 1944) and Schriever's highly classified discplane project was enlarged and taken over by Dr Richard Miethe who would later play an import role in America's postwar saucer programme. Across the Pond, aerodynamacist Charles Zimmermann had designed two different propeller driven circular winged aircraft for the US Navy called Flying Pancakes, which possessed flight characteristics that made them particularly suitable for carrier based operations. Aside from their overall saucer shape, the airframes and propulsion systems of these aircraft were fairly conventional and the same could be said of the disc shaped Messerschmitt AS-6, which was designed by Alexander Lippisch in Germany during WW11.

After the war, the Chance Vought XF5U-1 Flying Pancake was secretly replaced by a more advanced jet powered version, while the US Navy publicly commissioned the very elegant low aspect ratio Douglas F-6 Skyray jet fighter. Designed by Ed Heinemann, who drew heavily on Alexander Lippisch's research, the transonic manta ray shaped F-6 shared many aerodynamic features with earlier circular winged designs and several aircraft in the black domain. According to Britain's leading aviation writer Bill



Messerschmitt AS-6 developed during World War II

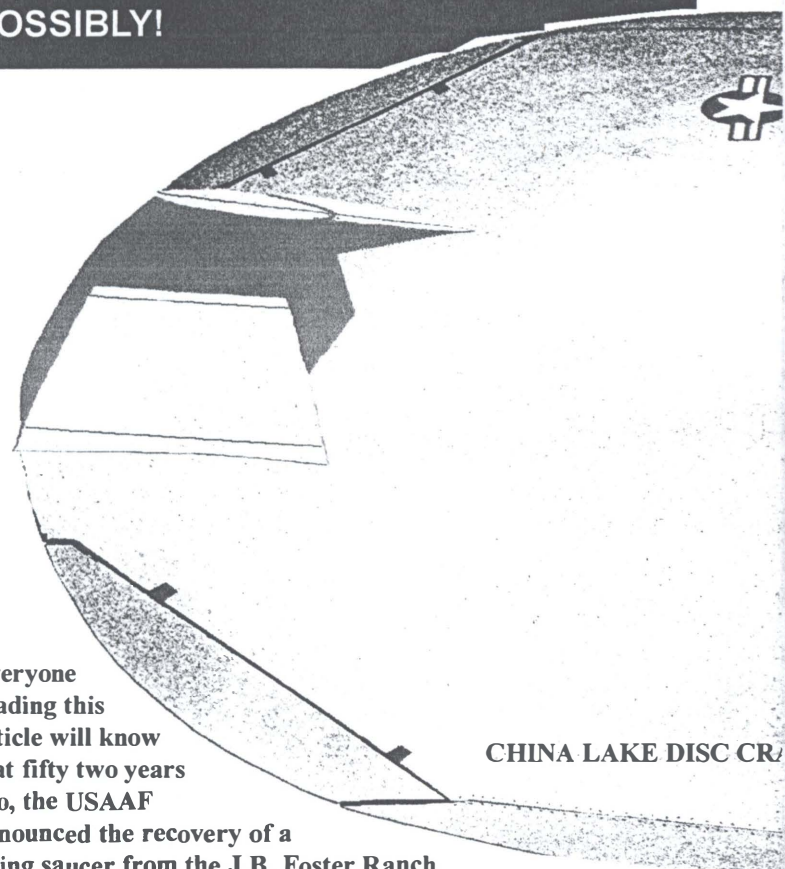
Gunston, the F-6 "flew beautifully, despite bristling with odd engineering features." By the late 1940s the advanced jet powered Flying Pancakes) began to account for a growing number of UFO sightings and work had commenced on a more sophisticated secret American flying disc project at the Avro-Canada facility near Toronto. Ten years later, this project was publicly unveiled as the Avrocar, which had more in common with an out of control Flymo lawnmower than an aircraft. However, in my opinion, the Avrocar was

specifically created to deflect attention from the real USAF programme called Silver Bug, while demonstrating to the public just how difficult it was to make a flying saucer fly. The USAF's Silver Bug was a highly advanced Mach 3.5 VTOL flying saucer interceptor, which may have been built in small numbers and flown from a secret base in the Nevada Desert from about 1958 onwards. I would just add that postwar flying disc development took place in Britain, France and the Soviet Union, although very little is known about any of these programmes at the present time. The most recent account of work on disc shaped aircraft indicates that a top secret US Navy stealth disc programme was conducted at the Northern China Lake Test Site in the early 1980s. Beyond this point, the preoccupation with radar invisibility and perhaps new developments in propulsion seems to have created a series of secret triangular shaped test vehicles.

THE BIGGEST SECRET OF ALL – POSSIBLY!

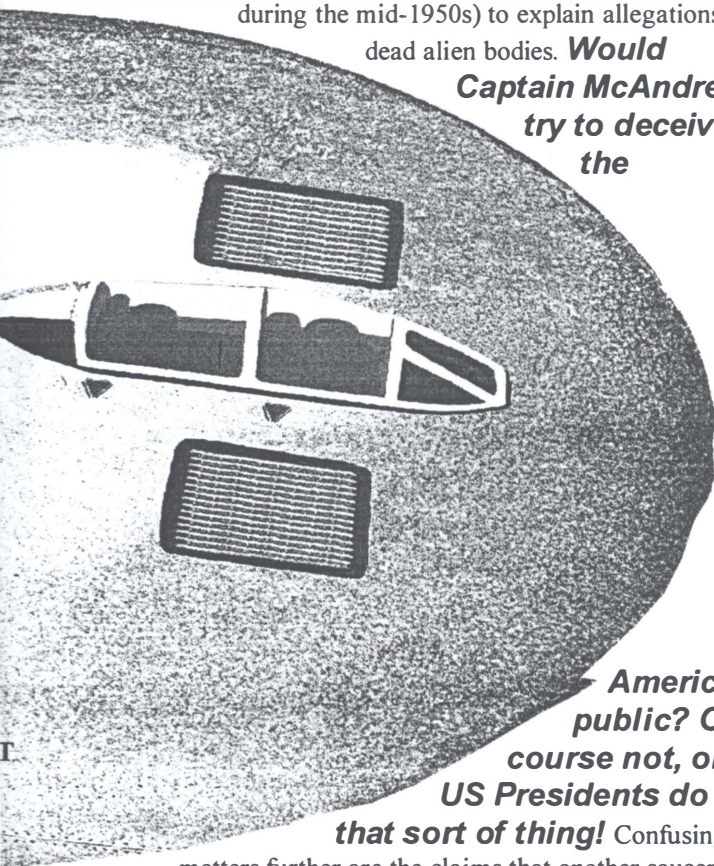
Everyone reading this article will know that fifty two years ago, the USAAF announced the recovery of a flying saucer from the J.B. Foster Ranch near Roswell, New Mexico. As the ramifications of their hasty press release became apparent, senior USAAF personnel started to panic and insisted they had recovered nothing more than a weather balloon.

In 1994, the late Senator Steven Schiff forced the USAF to reopen the Roswell Case and it was officially acknowledged that a cover-up had taken place. However, the USAF stuck with the original story and simply modified the details, suggesting it had been a more elaborate balloon called Project Mogul, which carried Top Secret equipment designed to listen for Soviet nuclear explosions. But official records show that the CIA only started to take an interest in the long range detection of Soviet nuclear tests a few weeks before the Roswell Incident and acoustic methods were considered unworkable. So is it possible that Project Mogul was nothing more than a minor experiment with low priority semi-official backing? Furthermore, it seems obvious that the debris



from any NYU balloon (which included Project Mogul) would have been immediately recognised by investigating personnel from the USAAF 509th Bomb Wing and they would have contacted the nearby balloon test site which was Alamogordo AAF. According to the director of Project Mogul, there were no Rawin radar targets attached to balloon flight #4, (said to be responsible for the incident) so where did all the metallic foil come from? After several years investigation, I have reached the conclusion that the Roswell Incident and subsequent cover up, may have been the crash-landing of a deep black experimental aircraft. (Perhaps a rocket assisted glider designed by former Nazi scientists for long range high altitude reconnaissance over the Soviet Union) It is not generally known that USAF Captain James McAndrew, (who came up with Project Mogul theory and produced the 1997 Roswell Report) informally sought opinions on this kind of possibility from several interested parties, just prior to the USAF press conference. This idea was then quietly discarded and the USAF reverted to its ludicrous balloon story, throwing in a few crash test dummies (from trials conducted during the mid-1950s) to explain allegations of

dead alien bodies. **Would Captain McAndrew try to deceive the**



American public? Of course not, only US Presidents do that sort of thing! Confusing

matters further are the claims that another saucer crashed in July 1947 some 150 miles east of Corona and this is where the alien bodies are said to have been recovered. If the reports of this second event are genuine, it is more likely to have been a highly classified prototype circular winged aircraft flown from within the huge White Sands test site. As far as the aliens are concerned, I have not managed to reach any reasonable or fair conclusions on this topic and the facts are now shrouded by myth and commercially driven deceit. However, several years ago, I talked with two members of the USAAF recovery team who were at the J.B Foster Ranch in 1947 and I am quite satisfied that: 1) the debris was unusual, 2) there was enough metal on the ground to justify claims that an aircraft had crashed (they initially thought it was a B-29 bomber) and 3) it was not a balloon of any kind. So the Roswell mystery continues. Was it an alien spacecraft? I don't think so, although I'm not going to entirely rule it out. If the exact location of the crash site could be

determined, a geochemical analysis of soil samples would confirm the presence of alien material, despite any clean-up operation. Could it have been an act of intentional "Cold War" disinformation? Possibly.

Was it a deep black aircraft developed from captured Nazi technology? Maybe, but if this was the case, why hasn't the Pentagon come clean? Was the Foster Ranch Crash the biggest event in history? Are the USAF afraid of losing face after years of intentional deceit, or do they simply prefer to maintain the alien myth?

Article & all Pictures

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BILL ROSE

Bill Rose has written articles for many technical magazines and journals, but is probably better known as a photojournalist. He has worked on photographic assignments around the world for various publishers and now runs his own business which specialises in P.R photography.

He has a B.A in Economics, completed some undergraduate studies in astronomy and he holds a recognised qualification in scientific photography. To date he has contributed to eight technical books and has illustrated several others. Bill's long term interests include astronomy, spaceflight, military aviation and UFO phenomena.

Hypnagogia, Lucid dreaming, and the Bed-based abduction scenario.

Kate Taylor

Despite the recent downturn of public interest in the UFO phenomenon, reports of abductions by aliens have maintained a steady presence in the sphere of UFO investigation. There are many kinds of abduction scenario being reported, ranging from those which occur in cars on lonely lanes, in isolated fields, and most commonly in bed at night-time.

Belief in abduction by aliens has almost reached the point of hysteria, and in this article I hope to be a voice of calm and to give what I consider to be extremely probable explanations for these events. I will be focusing upon the bed-based abduction scenario as this is the one most commonly reported, and thus the one which I believe needs to be exploded if only for the sake of the public's mental health.

From my own research and experience as a BUFORA investigator I am convinced that hypnagogia (the state of consciousness between wakefulness and sleep), and other sleep states are responsible for the vast majority of bed-based abduction scenarios. So many "abductions" occur at night whilst the experiencer (I prefer this objective term to the more subjective "abductee"), is in bed, that this very fact suggests some sleep state may be the cause.

Falling asleep is not as simple a matter as we might first think. As more research into consciousness continues, so our understanding of sleep is gradually developing further, although to a large extent in this area we are still, pardon the pun, fumbling in the dark.

The process of going to sleep as Empsom¹ notes "requires a readjustment before the 'normal' daytime mode of thinking changes to that of drowsiness, and is finally displaced by the onset of sleep."

It is during this time, as we slip into sleep, that our consciousness makes preparatory adjustments for the night ahead and that by definition hypnagogic states occur. Common features of this progression to sleep include the increasing lack of sensory awareness of surroundings, and the changing of the quality of thought, which "changes to become less logical and sometimes bizarre"². Such thinking and mulling over of the day's events occur frequently in most people's progression to sleep, in some people, however, hypnagogia also occurs. As Stan Blackmore notes³ "As one falls asleep both sensory input and arousal fall. The input controlled model of reality gets less and less input and less and less demands on it. Other trains of thought may temporarily become stronger and even briefly take over 'reality' status (producing the familiar experience of hypnagogic imagery) ..."

Hypnagogic states can encompass many different sensory and perceptual experiences, ranging from hearing music to, more commonly, hearing one's name being called. As Empsom⁴, "these experiences are easily confused with reality, and sometimes result in the sleeper waking up completely and attempting to answer the voices". Visual imagery is also a common feature of the hypnagogic state, and can be either animated or static, "very commonly people see static landscapes, moving faces or a sequence of pictures or geometric shapes"⁵ In a study of Aberdeen university students carried out by Peter McKellar his subjects 'quite frequently likened the images to lantern slides'⁶.

The kind of imagery experienced in hypnagogia can also vary from that of full dreaming by being more vivid, possibly because the full sensory perception of wakefulness has not yet dissolved completely into that of dreams.

All the above will no doubt have rung some bells for anyone involved familiar with abduction literature or involved in UFO research. My purpose in writing this article is to demonstrate that abduction experiences may not be all that they seem to be, and that rather they may have their roots in very earthly, yet unusual, stages of sleep. I will be focusing upon and deconstructing many of the more sensational abduction theorists' most precious tenets.

The best way to illustrate the relationship between hypnagogia and other states of sleep to abduction is to look at a case. In 1998 in the course of my duties as a BUFORA investigator I interviewed John Adams [pseudonym] who had made a high strangeness report to the organisation. From my interview with Adams, numerous classic abduction scenario features became apparent. Indeed, Adams himself was convinced that he had been abducted. The classic abduction scenario often begins with the experiencer linking the high strangeness events to seeing a UFO, and here was no exception. Adams made the connection to a sighting when he was 12. With the saturation of entertainment and factual media by UFOs it is unsurprising that such individual and most likely unrelated events can become linked in the experiencer's mind. Consciousness of UFOs has been raised to such an extent that more cases than ever before are being reported, with the knock-on effect that people are more likely to believe in UFOs and abductions unquestioningly.

Next came another classic feature of the scenario with strange things being experienced while in bed. Adams had been in bed for scarcely a few minutes when he perceived a there to be a shadowy figure across the door of his bedroom. As he had not been in bed for long, yet was tired, it is highly probable that he was entering the hypnagogic state. Seeing/feeling a presence as one begins to fall asleep is a common hypnagogic factor.

This feeling naturally made Adams feel defensive, but

after verifying that there was no-one in the room he returned to his sleeping position. He remarked that he did not feel fully conscious or fully asleep at this time. Adams then reported hearing an odd sound like gas being released from a bottle, but dismissed it as part of the typical night-time noises of the house. As we saw earlier, auditory experiences are common in the hypnagogic state.

Bed-based abduction scenario experiencers frequently report strange lighting effects as part of the events, as Whitely Strieber records⁷, "Then I was startled awake and saw, to my horror, that there was a distinct blue light being cast on the living-room ceiling. I was frightened because it wasn't possible for there to be any light there ... I watched this light creep slowly up the ceiling ..."

John Adams also experienced strange light. What was originally a small spot of light from near his bedroom window expanded to being approximately 30 centimetres in length, tilted and then came to rest above his head. As I noted earlier, seeing strange shapes is common in hypnagogia. Empson remarks that a possible explanation for these experiences⁸ "... Especially the sequences of geometrical shapes, or flashes, may be the result of discharges from the retina occurring in the absence of any stimulation - the so called entoptic phenomenon - which can also be observed when the eyes are open in the pitch dark." If you think this sounds a little far-fetched you can experience a similar effect by lying face down, eyes closed on a pillow. In this situation a veritable kaleidoscope of bizarre geometric shapes and flashes can be seen.

Neurologist John Hughlings Jackson was the first person to propose the Perceptual Release Theory⁹ which aims to explain the genesis of hallucination and dreams. The theory holds that as the senses gradually get less input as one falls asleep, the cortex is still alert and looking for information to process. As such it forms its perceptions from what would have been disregarded in the waking state, "... Such as the low-level random discharges from the retina. According to this theory, half-formed thoughts, memories as well as low-quality visual and auditory inputs now become grist to the perceptual mill, combining to give hypnagogic images."¹⁰

Research such as McKellar's has also provided evidence to suggest that people can, for a long time, not realise that they have hypnagogic experiences on a regular basis. Indeed, it can often be a chance trigger event that makes them realise that they actually do. I defy anyone not to notice the stark similarity between this undeniable scientific reality, and those who would have us believe in latent "abduction" memories which are "awakened" by a chance trigger. Is it not more likely that such recoveries of "abductions" are in fact memories of hypnagogic states?! As McKellar notes, hypnagogia "can be overlooked for a very long time even by those who subsequently do realise that they do have the experience frequently ... False negatives seem to occur by a process of ignoring what one is not alerted to notice, as well as from emotional blockage."¹¹ Such similarities between hypnagogia and "abduction" are too important to be overlooked.

Having examined visual and auditory abduction scenario phenomena, what then of the paralysis which is often

reported? This can be explained easily, for as Andreas Mavromatis notes¹², "Certain characteristics of sleep such as motor impotence, and of dreaming ... also appear in hypnagogia." In such reports of paralysis the experiencer often relates only being able to move their eyes, however, this can also be explained scientifically, "since all skeletal muscle groups except those that govern eye movements and breathing suffer a profound loss of tone during REM sleep, it is to be expected that most muscular response to dreamed movements will be feeble."¹³

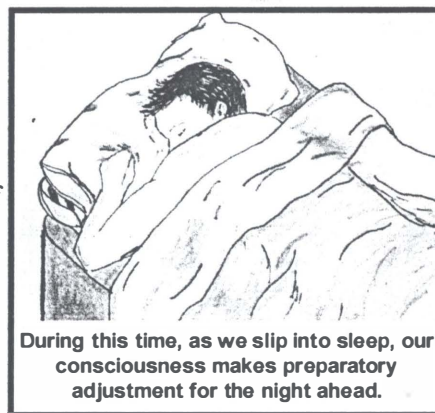
Feelings of paralysis or strange physical sensations may also be caused by the incorporation of outside events into the hypnagogic state/dream. For example, lying awkwardly on one's arm for too long may produce a feeling of numb paralysis; similarly, becoming entangled in the bedclothes may also give a strong sense of immobility. An example of how such events can become incorporated can be seen in a most vivid hypnagogic dream related by Maury. Maury imagined that he

had been sentenced to death by guillotine at the hands of French revolutionaries and even felt the blow of the blade on his neck, much to his understandable terror. When he awoke, however, he found that what had actually transpired

was simply that a pole had fallen on his neck in the night. In a theory which could have great implications for explaining "abductions", sleep researcher Ouspensky suggested that the dream could have started in reverse order with the pole falling on Maury's neck which "roused Maury into a half-sleep state in which, terrified by the strange and guillotine-like event, he imagined himself being beheaded, this image in turn gave rise to the scaffold ... which led to the Paris streets ... i.e. the appearance of one image gave rise to another and so on, by association and as an answer to Maury's bewilderment and shock"¹⁴. Ouspensky thus postulated that it was possible to dream a dream in one order of events and remember it in another order completely.

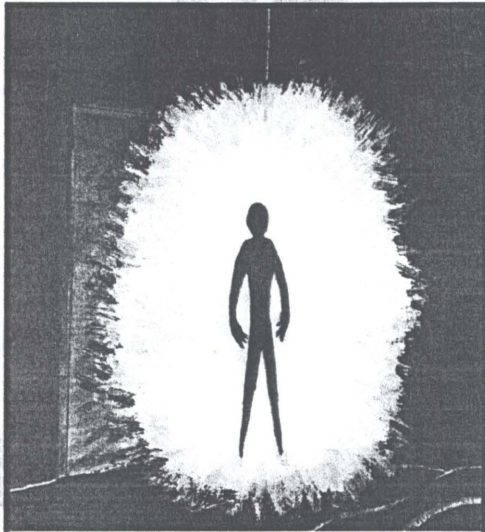
It should be noted at this point that hypnagogia is not the only possible explanation for these bed-based "abductions". Lucid dreaming and false awakenings must also play a considerable part: "The lucid dream is not unlike the initial dream in terms of mental state. They differ from each other mainly in the fact of their temporal occurrence: the initial dream occurs early in the sleep cycle whereas the lucid dream takes place at the tail end of it ... lucid dreams tend to grade imperceptibly into false awakenings ..."¹⁵

A more unusual aspect of the abduction scenario reported by the experiencer is that of floating, or being floated through the air and seeing the ground or indeed the Earth beneath them. Again, I believe that this may have its origins in sleep-related phenomena. While Susan Blackmore's work on OBEs and lucid dreaming is of



During this time, as we slip into sleep, our consciousness makes preparatory adjustment for the night ahead.

particular interest here, from my own experience I believe that an over-active imagination in the hypnagogic state can also cause such experiences. As someone with a keen interest in space and aviation I have often, when drifting off to sleep, had the feeling of being very high in space, as if in orbit, looking down at the Earth. At that moment the image is magnificently realistic, and almost tangible. I attribute such an experience, however, not to being abducted by aliens but rather to my own subconscious knowledge of many such NASA photographs. That is where the difference between objective scientific study and carefree sensationalism lies!



Seeing/ Feeling a presence as one begins to fall asleep is a common hypnagogic factor

I am aware that due to the constraints of space there have been some things in this article, such as shared bed-based abduction experiences, which I have not been able to discuss. I certainly hope to be able to do this in a future issue, and I am open to any (constructive) comments readers may have on my work.

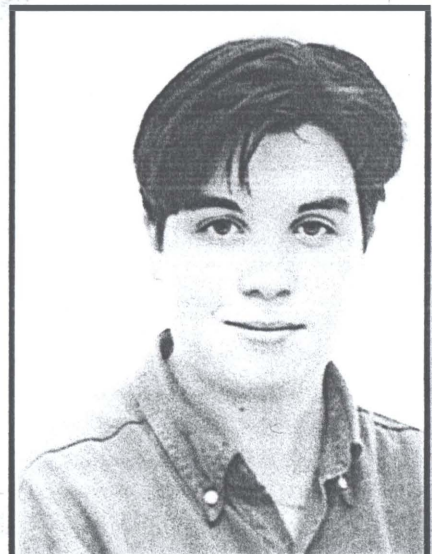
I hope that I have shown that the typical "abduction" experience is not as paranormal as some of the more sensationalist ufologists would like us to think, and that this article will perhaps encourage deeper thinking around this issue.

And the last word? Well, that goes to Glenn Campbell, who shows just how easy it is to "see" UFOs in our dreams: "On at least one occasion, while parked at night along SR-375, I have seen big multicoloured spacecraft move silently above my car. These were huge triangular or saucer shaped craft with many lights and complex surfaces ... Although the craft were very close to me and my view of them was vivid, I felt somehow paralysed at the time and had difficulty controlling my own movements and attention. The craft seemed to change in ways I cannot describe, and although I tried frantically, I had great difficulty analysing what I saw. Were the craft real? To my mind they were. It took some time and logical thought before I recognised that since I was lying face down on the back seat of the car, I could not possibly be seeing what I thought I was out the front window. The impressive craft were a dream, probably triggered by my desire to see UFOs."¹⁶

The author welcomes your e-comments at:
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The Big Grey Man of Ben Macdhui & Other Mountain Panics

PART I
Andy Roberts

*Though your nerves be of steel, and
your mind says it cannot be, you
will be acquainted with that fear
without a name, that intense dread
of the unknown that has pursued
mankind from the very dawn of
time.'*

Richard Frere[1]

The past eighty years has seen The Big Grey Man of Ben Macdhui become a staple for authors and journalists writing about Scottish legends. With the exceptions of the Loch Ness Monster and the Bonnybridge UFO hotspot it is arguably Scotland's best known example of strange phenomena. So much has been written about the Big Grey Man that one could be forgiven for believing it is a well-attested experience with tens if not hundreds of witnesses. If only it were that simple! When put under the microscope, away from the conventions of story telling or the obligations of having to make a profit, the Big Grey Man of Ben Macdhui (BGM), like the majority of other forteen phenomena, takes on a completely different appearance.

It's not my intention here to go over every last word which has been written about the BGM, nor to list each and every possible sighting and theory, rather to give an overview of the phenomenon and an analysis of the main sightings and explanations. Nor is it my intention to 'explain away' or to 'debunk' the phenomenon completely. Rather to broaden the discussion with some completely new case material and ideas which may shift encounters with the BGM into a class of experience to that which it occupies at the moment.

Witnesses to the phenomenon known as the Big Grey Man describe how they have variously encountered footsteps, a sensation of 'presence', sightings of a large hominid and an overpowering sense of panic whilst on the mountain called Ben Macdhui. The experience is terrifying enough to compel witnesses to flee in blind panic, often for several miles. Given that this takes place on rocky, dangerous ground, often in weather conditions involving mist and snow, we should not underestimate the power of the experience. The phenomenon is

usually, but not always, experienced by solitary witnesses. Accounts and theories of the phenomenon have been detailed in numerous books, magazines and newspapers from 1925 to as recent as 1998. Anyone wishing to gain a more general insight into the phenomenon and surrounding issues is advised to follow up the references given in this article and to certainly obtain Affleck Gray's excellent, if unstructured, book on the subject, which is written in the spirit of true forteen enquiry.[2]

Ben Macdhui, at 1309 metres (4296 ft), is the second highest mountain in the U.K. and lies in the heart of the mountain range known as the Cairngorms. The mountain comprises of a high plateau with a sub-arctic climate and is often covered in snow for months at a time. Weather conditions can be extreme and unpredictable. Sadly the Cairngorms have been defaced by ski-lifts and restaurants but until recently have remained remote, requiring considerable physical effort and mountaineering to navigate successfully. The wild nature and relative inaccessibility of the area has contributed to their popularity and the Cairngorms have been a playground for climbers, walkers, skiers, naturalists and those who love the high and lonely places for hundreds of years. Ben Macdhui has several spellings and its English translation is Gaelic for hill of the son of duff.[3]

Like any other area of land be it mountain, plain, or urban town-scape Ben Macdhui and its environs have a large body of oral and written folklore which encompass phenomena which broadly fall into the forteen and paranormal fields [4]. The majority of the folklore from the Cairngorm area refers to disparate phenomena which need not concern us here, save to recognise that the BGM does not exist as a discrete phenomenon.

Although the first recorded Big Grey Man experience as described earlier did not take place until 1891, and was not made public until 1925, there are antecedents to the matter which set the phenomenon in some geographic, folkloric and historical context.

In 1791 poet James Hogg, known as the Ettrick Shepherd, described seeing a huge figure on Ben Macdhui whilst tending his sheep. As he watched the halo which had formed around him due to the combination of sunshine and mist he suddenly noticed a huge, looming figure. It was vaguely human in shape and he imagined it to be the devil. Hogg fled in terror, not stopping until he reached fellow shepherds. The next day he saw the same figure under similar climatic conditions.

'It was a giant blackamoor, at least thirty feet high, and equally proportioned, and very near me. I was actually struck powerless with astonishment and terror. My first resolution was, if I could keep the power of my limbs, to run home and hide myself below the blankets with the Bible beneath my head.'

But instead of fleeing he stood his ground, determined to trace the source of the figure. Fear gave way to astonishment when he removed his hat and found the 'devil' mimicking this and his subsequent actions. Hogg believed that the phenomenon, which had initiated the terror a day earlier, was in fact an uncommon natural phenomena known as the 'Brocken

Spectre'. [5]

The Brocken Spectre, so named because the summit of the Brocken in Germany's Harz Mountains was one of the places it was first recorded from, is a dramatic natural effect with many variations. Essentially it is formed when the observer's shadow is cast onto mist by sunlight. The experience is dependent on the relationship between factors such as the brightness and angle of the sun, thickness of the mist, presence and intensity of rain or wind and the position of the observers. The resulting effect can range from the simple 'shadow' effect of the viewer to grossly distorted, moving images of what appears to be one or more giants. In all cases, however dramatic or terrifying to the witness, the Brocken Spectre is just one of nature's free light shows. It has been invoked by many writers to 'explain' the BGM and may have some relevance in a number of the experiences. But the Brocken Spectre is only a small part of the whole story.[6]

Several writers on the BGM have referred to an article which appeared in the 1831 edition of the Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal. The witnesses, Sir Thomas Lauder and friends were descending Macdhui in mist when initially they each saw their own Brocken Spectre, but not that of their two companions. This effect is due to the fact that a body of mist is not an opaque surface, but a constantly shifting matrix of water particles. Thus the witnesses position will determine how many Brockens they will see. At fifty yards apart Lauder and his companions could only see their own Brocken. When they moved close together they could all see each others.[7]

In The Cairngorm Mountains John Hill evocatively describes the Cairngorm experience, skilfully mixing perceptions of natural phenomena with the creative imagination of the mountain goer, finally querying how the traveller would feel:

if he shall discover that he has been accompanied in every step and motion by a shadowy figure of huge proportions and savage mien, flourishing in his hand a great pine-tree....Such are the spirits of the air haunting this howling wilderness...'[8]

Both Hill and Hogg refer to the legend of the 'fahm' as being prevalent in the Ben Macdhui area. A line in one of Hogg's Cairngorm poems tells of a man who, 'Beheld the fahm glide o'er the fell'. [9] Hill notes of the fahm that 'sometimes the phantom's head is large and his body small'. The legend of the fahm seems to have been first recorded in the Statistical Account of Scotland, in the section dealing with the area around Kirkmichael, which also includes Loch Avon and the eastern environs of Ben Macdhui. However, far from being a giant, this version of the fahm legend describes, '...small quadruped which they call fahm. In summer mornings it issue from its lurking places emitting a kind of glutinous matter fatal to horses.....It is somewhat larger than a mole, of a brownish colour, with a large head disproportionate to the body.

From this deformed appearance and its noxious quality the word seems to have been transformed to denote a monster, a cruel mischievous person who, in the Gaelic language is usually called *famh-fhear*.'[10]

Hastie, in his Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal article on the BGM notes that both Hill and Hogg's interpretation of the legend probably derive from this source. Hastie suggests the word 'fahm' (which doesn't exist in Gaelic) being a misreading of *famh*, which means mole and that Grant may have mistaken the Gaelic word for giant - *fanhair* - as *fhear*. [11] Hence we have the initial recording of the legend of a giant mole-like creature whose etymology and representation has been grossly distorted in less than a century, from supernatural poisonous mole-creature into a giant stick-wielding figure which stalks the mountain plateau.

However there are also legends of giants in the Cairngorm which may have informed Hill and Hogg's poetic speculations. High above Loch Einich, on the slopes of Sgor Gaoith, to the west of Ben Macdhui, is a natural feature called Am Bodach, the Old Man. There is also another stone bearing the name A'Chailleach, the Old Woman. One of the legends attached to these stone giants is that they are locked in eternal combat, doomed to hurl stones at each other. [12] Stones bearing these names are common in Scotland and the legends pertaining to them are similar. The notion of giants in and on the landscape, either personified by rock formations or as creatures from mythology is entrenched in the folklore of these Isles. With the Big Grey Man of Ben Macdhui we have one of the few which is part of a living tradition. Whether it is a breathing entity remains to be seen.

Hugh Welsh, camping with his brother by the summit cairn of Ben Macdhui in 1904 heard the type of footsteps which later became synonymous with the BGM. They heard the noise both at night and in daylight describing it as being like '....slurring footsteps as if someone was walking through water-saturated gravel.'

Welsh also recalled they were 'Frequently conscious of 'something' near us, an eerie sensation of apprehension, but not of fear as others seem to have experienced'. They questioned the head stalker at Derry Lodge who told them, 'That would have been the Fear Liath Mor you heard.' [13]

Fear Liath Mor is Gaelic for 'Big Grey Man' and if this account is true it is the first known reference to the BGM by name. That it was proffered as an explanation by a local stalker may indicate a larger body of tradition regarding the Big Grey Man which has gone unrecorded.

Moving further into the twentieth century, George Hall in his book *Leaves From A Rambler's Diary*, recounts the experience of an unnamed friend who worked in the Cairngorms. Hall gives few details, remember this was prior to any wide public knowledge of or interest in the Big Grey Man, but it seems his friend had an odd experience on Ben Macdhui involving a 'presence' which frightened him to such an extent he left the mountain,

after which the sensation faded.[14]

The Cairngorm Club Journal for 1921 noted a recent letter to the Aberdeen Free Press in which the writer, '....called attention to a myth prevalent in Upper Deeside to the effect that a big spectral figure has been seen at various times during the last five years walking about on the tops of the Cairngorms. When approached, so the story goes, the figure disappears. Moreover, it has got a name - 'Ferlie More', to wit.' [15] Obviously the name 'Ferlie More' is a derivative of the Gaelic Fear Liath Mor, or Big Grey Man, again perhaps suggesting the tradition of a local giant.

In 1924 Dr Ernest A Baker's book *The Highlands With Rope and Rucksack* appeared. Here Baker relates the experience of a friend whose job took him into the mountains, a deer stalker or perhaps a shepherd. Alone on Ben Macdhui one day he became aware of a terrifying presence which, as Affleck Gray recounts, 'disturbed him in a manner which was beyond his experience'. Gray makes the point that this was no ordinary fear but something so powerful that Baker's friend fled Ben Macdhui, the terror only subsiding when he reached low ground. Baker also reports how one mountain climber had told him that he would under no circumstances spend any time on Ben Macdhui alone, even in daylight.[16]

That's the pre-history of the BGM. Taking all the evidence into consideration it seems that prior to Collie's 1925 unveiling of his 1891 experience there was a tradition of a giant figure and of 'presence's' which cause fear in the Cairngorm regions. Whether any of the foregoing was a template onto which later BGM reports were hung on to or expanded from is debatable.

In discussing the BGM the researcher is immediately confronted with the problem of exactly what can be admitted as evidence for its existence. Affleck Gray's book lists numerous alleged BGM encounters and draws in a plethora of other ghosts and paranormal phenomenon encountered on Ben Macdhui.[17] This heady mix gives the impression there are far more BGM encounters than there actually are. There is also the problem relating to the geography of the mystery. Many encounters and experiences attributed to the BGM are not actually on Ben Macdhui but from surrounding mountains and valleys. So the first step in any discussion about the BGM is to define what constitutes a BGM experience.

My definition, based on all available sources, is as follows:

The experience must contain any or all parts of the core phenomenon. This core phenomenon consists of the following elements:

- A giant figure.
- Footsteps being heard.
- A sensation of terror or panic, strong enough to cause flight.
- The experience must have taken place on the mountain of Ben Macdhui or in its immediate environs.[18]

This immediately discounts much of the phenomena discussed in Gray's book such as the many odd sounds, singing, chanting, musical notes etc

as well as the sightings of figures (especially the ones described as of human size) at a distance and unaccompanied by other phenomena. The sounds are almost certainly attributable to natural phenomenon such as the actions of wind, snow and water in an extreme environment. The 'figures' seen at a distance are just that and may well be other climbers. Gray discussed this problem at length and eventually accepts this is likely to be the case.[19]

This definition could be construed as being unnecessarily dismissive of what might be seen as supporting evidence. I will be the first to admit its inadequacies, but when dealing with a phenomenon as mutable (both by witnesses and its commentators) as the BGM it is essential to have some parameters within which to work.

Anyone who has spent any time in wild, mountainous or open country will be well aware of the problems of visual and aural perception. Particularly when alone, especially in poor visibility or in bad weather. The mountaineering literature is scattered with many good examples of these perceptual tricks, of figures being seen, of presence's being felt and so on.

As an example it is worth quoting the experience of veteran Scottish mountaineer and author W.H.Murray which also took place in the Cairngorms.

'When we started on the last rise to Cairn Toul there came a wider clearance than usual. Suddenly Mortimer gripped my arm and pointed uphill through the misty chasm. "Look!" he exclaimed, "Two men crossing to Glen Einich." Upon looking up at the slope I was duly surprised to see two climbers a long way ahead of us....I watched them traverse a full fifty feet from east to west across the snow-slope, one about ten yards in front of the other....We advanced and saw them halt, apparently to wait for us. At a hundred yards range they turned out to be two black boulders. So great was our astonishment that we failed even to laugh at ourselves.' [20]

On a similar note J.A. Rennie writes that, 'Stefannson, the Arctic explorer, tells of an instance when drifting sea mist once so magnified a tiny lemming that he raised his rifle in the belief that he had come upon a musk-ox.' [21]

The sense of hearing is also widely affected by environmental factors. I recall a backpacking trip in the Lake District during the summer of 1976 when I heard my first name being repeatedly called from behind a wall as I toiled up the Kirkstone Pass at 6 a.m.. Looking over the wall, fully expecting to find tangible evidence of some supernatural agency, I was amused to find a sheep bleating! For further evidence of the frequent unreliability of the senses, in mountain environments, and their concomitant interpretations, I wholeheartedly recommend Dr Helen Ross's book which deals with this and other related matters.[22]

Returning to the definition of the BGM, and by using this definition, an analysis of the BGM
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literature using primary and secondary sources but discounting rumour and anecdote, reveals the following factors:

- There are only six 'good' first or well attested accounts which fit the criteria.
- Of these only three took place on the summit or summit plateau of Ben Macdhui.
- Only two of the six include a 'Big Grey Man', or similar figure.
- Of those, one was later relegated by the witness to either being imagined or as a confabulation of panic and mist.

This interpretation is obviously my own and open to argument but I would suggest that however the sources are looked at none of the factors above would differ by more than one, either way. So bearing that in mind, let's look at the source material.

Despite rumours that the BGM was experienced frequently by climbers in the late 19th century the only record from that century is that of Professor Norman Collie's 1891 encounter. This experience is the one most often quoted by writers on the subject and the one which brought the BGM to the general public's attention.

Collie was Professor of Organic Chemistry at University College, London. A climbing contemporary of Aleister Crowley he was a keen all-weather mountaineer well used to the rigours of the Himalayas, Alps, Rockies and Scotland. Collie was a rigorous scientist who was closely involved with the discovery of the gas neon, and was responsible for taking the first X-ray for surgical purposes. [23]

Collie did not go public in the U.K. with his experience until 1925, although there is circumstantial evidence his was the tale recounted in Baker's book, as the two were climbing partners[24]. Speaking at the Annual Dinner of the Cairngorm Club on November 28th that year, he recounted his frightening experience on Ben Macdhui. His story was published within days by an Aberdeen newspaper and shortly afterwards in the Cairngorm Club Journal. The account in the Press and Journal read:

'I was returning from the cairn on the summit in a mist when I began to think I heard something else than merely the noise of my own footsteps. For every few steps I took I heard a crunch, and then another crunch as if someone was walking after me but taking steps three or four times the length of my own. I said to myself 'This is all nonsense'. I listened and heard it again but could see nothing in the mist. As I walked on and the eerie crunch, crunch, sounded behind me I was seized with terror and took to my heels, staggering blindly among the boulders for four or five miles nearly down to Rothiemurchus Forest. Whatever you make of it I do not know, but there is something very queer about the top of Ben Macdhui and I will not go back there by myself I know.' [25]

The only other first person account of his experience comes from the obituary published following Collie's death in 1942.

'One day at Eastertime I was climbing Ben Macdhui. It was very misty and I was only able to see a few yards from me when not very far from the summit, I suddenly heard footsteps on the snow behind me. Confident that some man was following me, I waited for him to join me, but the moment I stopped the footsteps also stopped. When I started on my way again, once more I heard the footsteps clearly. More than ever convinced that some man was on my track I turned and ran back for some distance, but found no-one. Once again I started on my way to the summit and once again I heard footsteps which stopped whenever I stopped. When at last I reached the summit the footsteps did not stop but came nearer and nearer until they came right up to me. At that instant I was seized with an intolerable fright and I ran my hardest down the mountainside. No power on earth will ever take me up Ben Macdhui again.[26]

According to his biographer, Collie was true to his word and never climbed Ben Macdhui again.[27]

Baly, Collie's obituarist had, at times, worked and climbed with him and his unreferenced account gives the impression it was obtained verbatim from Collie. But it differs slightly from the account in both the Press and Journal and the Cairngorm Club Journal, changing the story slightly. The Press and Journal article and Baly's obituary have been the two sources from which all subsequent re-tellings of Collie's experience have been taken.

Another element often used by writers dealing with the BGM is to suggest that although Collie didn't speak publicly about his experience in the U.K. until 1925, he had originally revealed his story in an obscure New Zealand newspaper at the turn of the century. Despite no one having seen or referenced the original source - usually given as an article entitled A Professor's Panic - it is nevertheless used to add weight to the story. It is first mentioned in an article about the BGM by Ronald W. Clark in Scotland's Magazine, November 1961. However there is no evidence, according to his biographer, that Collie visited New Zealand until the 1930s.[28]

Yet another variation which has crept into the Collie story is that he saw the 'something' which was causing the footsteps. This canard stems from Seton Gordon's retelling of the experience. Gordon used the phrase 'Collie encountered this spectre', seeming to infer a visual encounter. But this statement is not backed up by Collie's 1925 account, and it is clear from Gordon's overall context that Collie saw nothing[29]. His experience was purely the hearing of footsteps, followed by blind panic.

It has been suggested that Collie invented the whole story having, according to Rennie McOwen, 'a mild reputation as a prankster'.[30] But again, accounts differ. Affleck Gray believed him to be 'sardonic and dry as dust, he did not suffer fools gladly'.[31] In her biography Mills notes that despite his scientific rigour Collie was a bit of a nature mystic who believed in the Loch Ness Monster.[32]

Whatever his character, whatever the minor variations in the story it appears that Collie did have a terrifying experience and one which had a dramatic effect on him. He was convinced that there was 'something very strange'

about the summit of Ben Macdhui, something he clearly believed was supernatural in origin. His biographer spoke to Collie's niece about the matter and she confirmed that she had heard the story from him many times and that 'Uncle Nor believed in it completely'.[33]

Collie, for all his science, was not a reductionist though and well understood the atmospheres created by wild places. Years prior to revealing his Ben Macdhui experience he wrote '...there are places that one dreads, when one trembles and is afraid, one knows not why and fears stand in the way'.[34] In her discussion of the matter Collie's biographer concludes that, 'Collie remained emphatic - something beyond the wit of man haunted that mountain'.[35]

Shortly after the newspaper coverage of Collie's Cairngorm Club speech the Press & Journal ran a piece entitled 'Opinions on the Elusive "Big Grey Man"'. Several Cairngorm Club members, with hundreds of Ben Macdhui ascents between them, opined on the legend. Robert Clarke claimed he had heard the story direct from Collie in 1915 and as a result made enquiries in the area among the older deer stalkers and crofters. He found that it was virtually unknown on Deeside to the south but that it was 'still current among the older residents on Speyside, where it had apparently had its rise'.[36].

William Gordon, then president of the Cairngorm Club, regarded such stories as 'perfect nonsense', although having heard the story direct from Collie himself. Gordon is quoted as saying 'It was not even a tradition entertained, as such, among the members of the club, nor had he ever encountered residents on the Deeside or Speyside districts, abutting upon the Cairngorms who gave forth the story or hinted at anything of the kind.'[37] Arguments as to whether or not there was a pre-existent tradition of the BGM raged in newspapers, magazines and climbing journals for the next few years but no specific oral or written tradition pre-dating Collie's experience has ever surfaced.

The second account of the BGM originates from another mountaineer and medical colleague, Dr Henry Kellas. Unfortunately neither he nor his brother, with him at the time, ever recorded their experience and Henry Kellas died on the 1921 Mount Everest Reconnaissance Expedition. Their account, also widely featured in the BGM legend featured, first appeared in print as a letter in the pages of the Press and Journal in December 1925, following hot on the heels of Collie's speech to the Cairngorm Club. The account read:

'The correspondence in your paper on the subject of the Ferla Mohr has encouraged me to state the story as given to me by the late Mr Henry Kellas, my lifelong friend, with whom I once climbed Ben Macdhui. He and his brother, Dr Kellas, had been chipping for crystals in the late afternoon well below the cairn, and were together on the slope of a fold of the hill. Suddenly they became aware of a giant figure coming down towards them from the cairn. They saw it pass out of sight in the dip on the side of the fold remote from themselves, and awaited its reappearance. But fear possessed them ere it did reach the top, and they fled. They were aware it

was following them, and tore down by Corrie Etchachan to escape it. Mr Kellas said there was a mist on part of the hill, but refused to believe that the figure could be the shadow of either his brother or himself, causing an optical illusion. He asked why not two figures if that had been the case. But he never spoke of 'crunching' or of footsteps being heard by either himself or his brother.' [38]

This is not a primary source for the story and must be treated as such. But if we allow for it being a genuine account with a degree of accuracy, it is the first recorded sighting of a giant figure. Kellas' certainty that it couldn't be a Brocken Spectre because there were two witnesses to one phenomenon is not borne out by the factors which govern the Brocken's appearance and would have depended on where he was standing in relative to his brother. The conditions of mist and light mentioned in the account would have been optimum for a Brocken to be seen. But Brockens only move if the observer/s moves and going on the details given it is difficult to ascertain whether Kellas and his brother were standing or moving. Given that they were chipping for crystals the likelihood is that they were stationary at the time.

The date of the Kellas brothers experience is unclear. Affleck Gray points to it being twelve years after Collie's encounter, placing it in 1903. There is also some confusion as to the exact circumstances. The Press & Journal account gives it as being on a late afternoon. Gray mentions that it was late on a clear June night. A clear June night in those latitudes, even after midnight, would have been very light. Gray does not reference his alternate version and I have been unable to contact him or locate his papers on the subject.

But the panic engendered by the experience, whatever its origin, seemed to be real enough and like Collie the Kellas brothers fled. And not just a few yards, or even hundreds of yards, but several miles, risking life and limb over rough and dangerous terrain.

Mountaineer Alexander Tewnion wrote an account of his 1943 BGM experience for The Scots Magazine:

'Of all the experiences that have come my way, one stands out above all others in its strangeness. This was when I shot the Fear Liath Mor, the Big Grey Man of Ben Macdhu. It happened like this. In October 1943 I spent a ten day leave climbing alone in the Cairngorms. Rations were short then, and I carried a revolver and ammunition to shoot any hares or ptarmigan that came my way. One afternoon, just as I reached the summit cairn of Ben Macdhu, mist swirled across the Lairig Ghru and enveloped the mountain. The atmosphere became dark and oppressive, a fierce, bitter wind whisked among the boulders, and, fearing a storm was imminent, I took hurriedly to the Coire Etchachan path. Above Loch Etchachan the path angles easily downhill. I was swinging along at about five miles an hour when an odd sound echoed through the mist - a loud footstep, it seemed. Then another, and another. Spaced at long intervals!'

'I am not unduly imaginative, but my thoughts flashed instantly to the well-known story of Professor Norman Collie and the Fear Liath Mor. Then I felt the reassuring weight of the loaded revolver in my

pocket. Grasping the butt I peered about in the mist, here rent and tattered by eddies of wind.

A strange shape loomed up, receded, came charging at me! Without hesitation I whipped out the revolver and fired three times at the figure. When it still came on I turned and hared down the path, reaching Glen Derry in a time I have never bettered since. You may ask, was it really the Fear Liath Mor? Frankly, I think it was.

Many times since then I have traversed Macdhu in mist, bivouacked on it in the open, camped near its summit for days on end on different occasions - often alone, and always with an easy mind. For on that day I am convinced I shot the only Fear Liath Mor my imagination will ever see.' [39]

Tewnion's experience is widely quoted in the BGM literature. The fact that someone would be so scared as to pull a gun on the phenomenon and fire it, gives considerable weight to the 'reality' of the experience. It also contains all the criteria for a BGM experience. It cannot easily be explained in terms of a Brocken Spectre. Yet few writers quote Tewnion's letter to Affleck Gray in 1966 when he wrote:

'To this day I am convinced that I saw something but I am equally convinced that something was only a towering wisp of mist which I imagined to be a menacing ghost.' [40]

Peter Densham recounted his BGM experience verbally to many friends but did not write an account himself. Eventually it was recorded by his friend, mountaineer and author Richard Frere. The encounter took place in May 1945 when Densham was in charge of aeroplane rescue in the Cairngorms during W.W.II. Densham arrived at the summit around mid-day and settled down to eat his sandwiches and:

'.....was eating a piece of chocolate a little later when I had the sudden impression there was someone near me - an impression which is sometimes experienced by mountaineers. I did not pay much attention to the impression knowing it was fairly common. After a little I had the impression of something cold on the top of my neck. I had the hood of my anorak down. I thought this feeling of cold was due to the air having become more moist, but I still seemed to feel a pressure on my neck. I stood up and was conscious of a crunching noise from the direction of the cairn on my left. I went forward to investigate this noise. When I got near to this cairn I began to think of the Grey Man and his footsteps. I thought this experience very interesting and until within a few feet of the apparent source of the sound I was not the least frightened. Suddenly, however, I was overcome by a feeling of apprehension and after a little my overpowering wish was to get off the mountain. I found myself running at an incredible pace, and then realised that I was running in the direction of Lurcher's Crag. I tried to stop myself

and found this was extremely difficult to do. It was as if somebody was pushing me. I managed to deflect my course, but with a great deal of difficulty, and I managed to strike the direction between the left of the Lairig Ghru and Coire an Lochain. I ran down the ridge all the way to the Allt Mor Bridge, and all the way past Glenmore, and I was right on the other side of the loch before I stopped running.' [41]

Densham's account flags up several points. The most significant is that although his experience is firmly enshrined within BGM lore like Collie he did not see anything at all. Densham's experience consisted solely of feeling a presence and being gripped by a fear. As with other BGM experiences the fear was so compelling that it caused him to run blindly for several miles, narrowly avoiding certain death if he had run over Lurcher's Crag. The phrase 'I found myself running at an incredible speed' suggests he was fully aware of what was happening, yet so overpowered by it he could not stop it. Also, according to Affleck Gray, Densham was aware of the BGM legend and 'scornful' of any power which could make a man flee in terror. [42] He later had another unusual experience on Ben Macdhui involving phantom voices. He attributed both incidents to a 'psychic' origin, the 'effect on his consciousness of undefined properties of the mountain' and contended that Ben Macdhui was '...the most mysterious mountain I have ever been on.' [43]

These four accounts are the most important ones relating to the BGM which have come to light as being from Ben Macdhui and which incorporate elements of the core phenomenon. There are however a couple of tales from the vicinity of Ben Macdhui which may have some relevance to the mystery.

Joan Grant, spending the stalking season of 1928 in the Cairngorms with her husband, set off walking through the Rothiemurchus Forest towards the Cairngorms. The day was too hot for any serious climbing and so after a while they set off back down to Aviemore.

'Nothing could have been farther from my mind than spooks when suddenly I was seized with such terror that I turned and in panic fled back along the path. Leslie ran after me, imploring me to tell him what was wrong. I could only spare breath to tell him to run faster, faster. Something - utterly malign, four-legged and yet obscenely human, invisible and yet solid enough for me to hear the pounding of its hooves, was trying to reach me. If it did I should die, for I was far too frightened to know how to defend myself. I had about half a mile when I burst through an invisible barrier behind which I was safe. I knew I was safe now, though a second before I had been in mortal danger; knew it as certainly as though I were a torero who has jumped the barrier in front of a charging bull.' [44]

Grant's account frequently becomes entangled in BGM lore even though it took place several miles from the summit of Ben Macdhui, did not involve a sighting and was not witnessed by, or even conveyed to, her companion. Grant was a

writer of historical fantasy who had a strong belief in reincarnation and similar ideas and it has been suggested that her encounter was more the product of a fertile mind than of any genuine experience.

Grant also notes that: 'A year later one of my Father's professors described an almost exactly similar experience he had when bug-hunting in the Cairngorms. He was a materialist, but he had been so profoundly startled that he wrote to The Times - and received a letter from a reader who had also been pursued by the 'Thing''. [45]

Affleck Gray checked The Times for the relevant period and I have done so myself. No account similar to the one mentioned by Grant appears to exist. This does not of course mean it was never printed, but it is typical of the sort of "unfindable" information which accretes around accounts of a fortean nature, where a key piece of information has been seen but then 'mysteriously' is untraceable. Allegations that Collie's experience appeared in a New Zealand newspaper are of a similar order. In the wider fortean field a good example is the mystery surrounding the famous 'Thunderbird' photograph, the search for which has become an item of fortean interest in itself! [46]

Speyside author Wendy Wood also had a bizarre experience below Ben Macdhui in the Lairig Ghru pass. This took place in 1940. Wood claims she heard '...an enormous echoing voice which seemed to use Gaelic words. It occurred to her that it might be the barking of a deer magnified by a freak echo. Latterly, the sound seemed to come from beneath her feet.' Although half convinced the sound had a natural origin Wood circled the area in case it was from an injured climber. As she did so she '...had an uneasy feeling of someone following her and taking gigantic strides. She ran away and did not pause until close to Whitwell when the barking of a dog brought her to her senses'. [47]

I have included this account for a number of reasons. It shows how easily experiences become connected to the BGM legend even when they start with something such as an undefined noise. Wood claimed no knowledge of Collie or Kellas' experiences at the time and yet, if we believe her account, developed a similar experience leading her to panic and flee.

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These accounts are the main body of experiences comprising the BGM experiences. Explanations for the BGM have been tossed to and for in numerous editions of many Scottish newspapers as the interest in the BGM has risen and fallen. Books such as Gray's detail theories ranging from the BGM as space-visitor or faerie-like elemental to outright hoax. No real evidence is ever put forward to back these claims up and they rest entirely on belief and speculation. One of the main contentions has been that the experiences are evidence of a flesh and blood creature of the same type as the Yeti, Bigfoot or Alma [48]. I doubt this very much. Even being charitable with the evidence and broadening the content

of acceptable cases to include

anecdote and third and fourth hand stories within a twenty mile radius of Ben Macdhui, it is almost certain that the BGM is not a corporeal creature. There are no photographs, no bones, no fur or skin samples, no evidence of a family group, no droppings, no evidence of any predatory action on the local mammal population. Not even a reasonable number of good consistent accounts seen within a defined area.

Although the Cairngorm plateau is a wild, oft-inhospitable place, since the boom in outdoor activities of the last thirty years or so the area is frequently visited by relatively large numbers of people at all times of day, night and year. It seems logical that if the BGM was physical in nature some tangible evidence would have come to light by now. When dealing with the possibility of other large relict hominids such as the Yeti etc. being flesh and blood creatures the argument is considerably strengthened by the existence, however ambiguous, of photographs, videos, footprint casts, skin and hair samples etc. None of these exist in respect of the BGM and until they do it is reasonable to assume that we are not dealing with a physical creature.

However, when considering any physical evidence connected to the BGM it is worth noting that some accounts refer to photographs of unknown footprints taken in the Spey Valley.[49] Although the location of the photographs is some fifteen miles from the summit of Ben Macdhui it has been claimed or inferred by some writers that they may of the BGM. Indeed Rennie cites a ghillie as saying (upon seeing the footprints) they were 'Bodach tracks'[50]. This comment, made by a local man may indicate the survival of a tradition connecting unexplained phenomena to the legendary 'Bodach' or old man, of wider Scottish legend. As these tracks have been proffered as physical evidence for the BGM in the literature they and their possible origins need addressing.

The source of these photographs is the book Romantic Speyside, by J.A. Rennie. Rennie describes how on December 2nd 1952 about a mile outside the village of Cromdale,

he came across mysterious tracks which: 'were running across a stretch of snow covered moorland, each print 19 inches long by about 14 inches wide and there must have been all of seven feet between each "stride". There was no differentiation between a left and a right foot, and they preceded in an approximately single line.'[51]

Rennie likens them to the mysterious 'Devil's Hoof prints' found in Devon during the winter of 1855, which have been a Fortean staple for years.[52] Rennie followed the tracks for about half a mile, until they 'terminated at the foot of a pine tree, for all the world as though the strange creature making them had leapt up into the foliage of the tree.' Twenty yards further on he picked the tracks up again and followed them across a field and down to the river's edge where they terminated opposite the village churchyard. Rennie rushed home for

his camera and showed the resulting photographs to baffled locals. Writers often cite Rennie's photographs as evidence for the BGM case but fail to quote further from his account at this point, which is regrettable as he goes on to give highly useful information.

Whilst working in Northern Canada in the 1920s Rennie came across similar tracks whilst crossing a frozen lake. These tracks reduced his French-Canadian companion to a state of gibbering terror as he believed them to belong to the Wendygo, a Bigfoot-like creature. Rennie was baffled by the tracks until later that winter when he saw the mysterious tracks for the second time. But on this occasion he saw them being made.

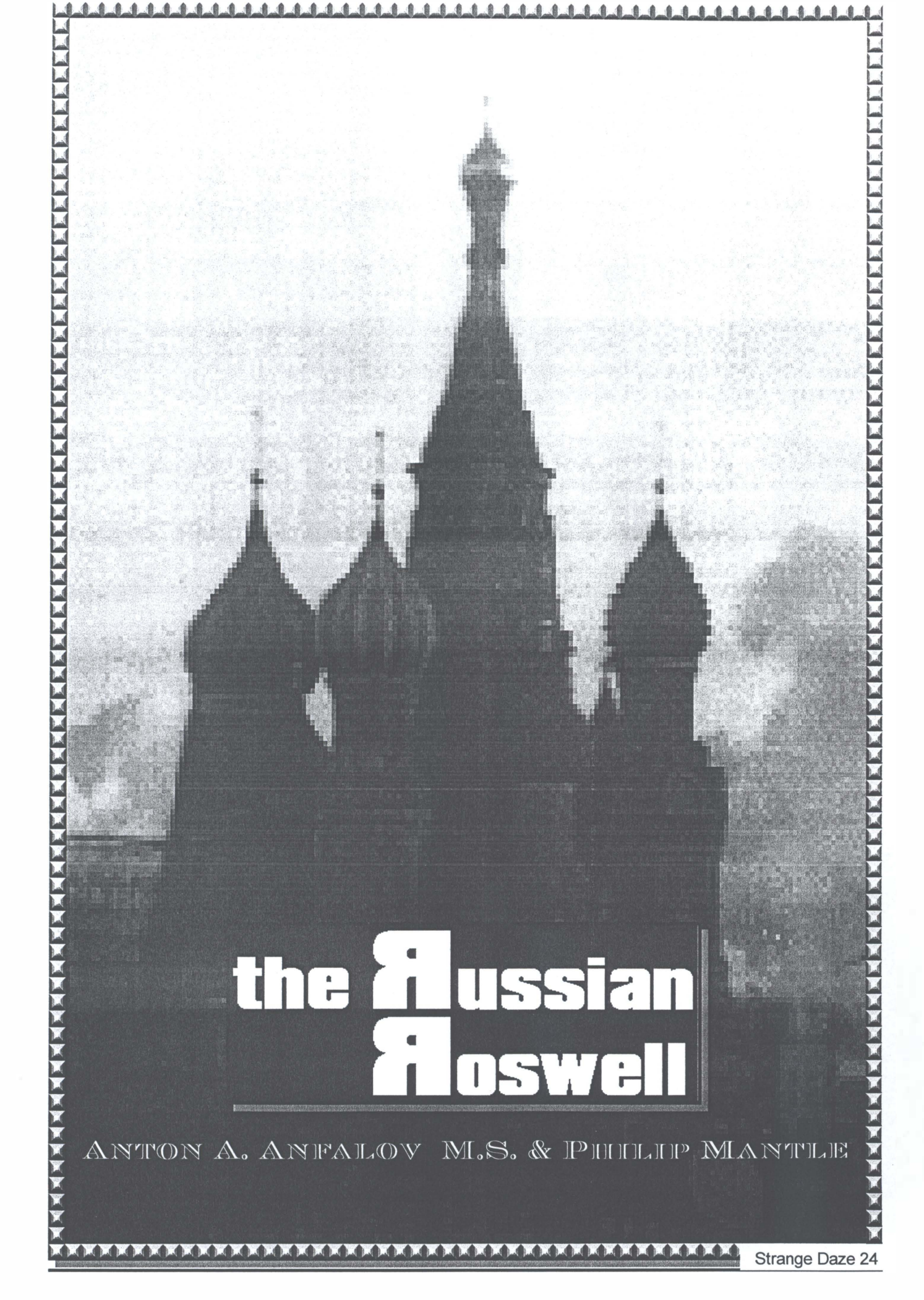
'There on the flawless, smooth white of the snow, a whole succession of tracks in "line-astern" were appearing miraculously before my eyes. No sign of life anywhere, no movement even, other than the drifting clouds overhead and those tracks springing suddenly into being as they came inexorably towards me. I stood stock-still, filled with reasonless panic. The tracks were being made within 50 yards of me -20-10-then, smack! I swung round brushing the water from my eyes, and saw the tracks continuing across the lake. In that moment I knew that the Wendygo, Abominable Snowman, Bodach Mor, or what have you, was forever explained so far as I was concerned.'[53].....

TO BE CONTINUED: NEXT ISSUE

Andy Roberts has dabbled in the arcane and recondite for the best part of thirty years now. He has written books on UFOlogy and folklore, edited UFO *Brigantia* and the *Armchair Ufologist* and contributed to *Fortean Times* among other publications.

His philosophy is one of 'you may have observed when you walk into a wall you observe a certain sensation of reality' and he believes that the human mind and its interaction with the environment are the only thing worthy of any real study. He has no time for believers in extraterrestrials, intradimensionals the Jolly Green Giant or any of that nonsense. But he has a great deal of time for study of the **beliefs** into those things.

In the real world he works at a hostel for homeless ex-offenders and lives by the lyrics of the *Grateful Dead*.



the Russian Roswell

ANTON A. ANFALOV M.S. & PHILIP MANTLE

This case is to Russia what the Roswell Incident is to the USA. On June 30 1908, a huge fireball descended and exploded above the taiga in the Tunguska region of Russia. One of the largest explosions known to man, this well documented event has been chronicled in books and magazines around the world. Fifty eight years later, at the end of June (or beginning of July according to some versions) 1966, approximately 1300 kilometres west of the 1908 Tunguska site, another strange object came to earth accompanied by yet another huge explosion. There were media reports regarding this incident known as the 'Obsky Meteorite' and it is still officially classified as **TOP SECRET** in Russia today.

Because of the secrecy surrounding this event it was extremely difficult for Moscow based UFO researcher Nikolay Kuzmin to locate and interview the relevant witnesses whose eventual testimonies are thought to be only the tip of the iceberg as far as the 'Obsky Meteorite' is concerned. According to Kuzmin, the Russian military and scientific services have buried the facts of the case so deep, that as yet no official documents have surfaced regarding this case, nor has the exact impact site been located.

The information concerning this case has come from four individual witnesses. Information on this case has only slowly leaked out. The impact site is suspected to be some 10-15 kilometres north-east of the village of Topolevka which is in the Tomsk region (approximately 584 kilometres north-west of Tomsk) in Western Siberia. Nearby are the rivers Ob' and Tryigorodskaya which is the tributary to the river Ob'. This is near the border of the Truemj region and Tomsk region.

1966 was a year of intense UFO activity in the Soviet Union. and it is therefore no surprise to find that this case came in a year of high UFO activity. Moscow geologist Oleg Ivanovich was the first witness located by Kuzmin. Ivanovich recounted the following story:

"A hatch was ajar and dense smoke was flowing from its opening. Something dark lay prone near the edge of the hatch. Through the smoke it looked like some kind of tentacle."

"In the early part of summer in 1966 I was invited on a geological prospecting expedition along the tributary Tryigorodskaya to the river Ob'. Early in June we had flown from Moscow to Tomsk then by boat up the river. The summer was very hot and it was my first trip to the taiga. The trees provided a marvellous landscape. We were surveying for suspected oil fields and deposits of combustible gases. Unfortunately we did not locate any oil or gas deposits during our

surveys.

Unfortunately I do not remember the exact date. We were camped out in the taiga wilderness some 20-30 kilometres north-east of Topolevka. One day we were passing a bog when our cook Valya stumbled into it and was soon up to her waist in mud. Because of this minor accident we stayed at this location for the night. We had a long march to navigate the next day so we took advantage of the rest. It was during this night that I was awoken with a deafening wail. The noise was coming from the sky somewhere and it hurt my ears to listen to it. The roof of our tent was illuminated by a blinding bright globe approaching us in the sky. Before I had time to run out of my tent the globe exploded. All around us erupted in flames. The tress were alight nearby and such was the intense heat that we took quilts from our beds, soaked them quickly in water, and pulled them over us for protection. It was this quick thinking that quite literally saved us that night.

The next morning the fire had abated somewhat and the forest was charred and black. We gathered what few possessions had survived the fire and decided we had better get out of the area. Moving to the area where we thought the explosion had occurred strange things started to happen. Our compass needle began to spin out of control, our radio set would not work and we began to feel weak and ill. The trees here were laid down in one direction with the tops ripped off as if someone had taken a giant comb to them. It was here that we saw lights, twinkling bright coloured lights. The lights could be seen through the trees and flashing in what looked like a semi-circle. We cautiously moved closer. Raised up out of the bog was a streamlined hull of an object which appeared to be charred and burnt. It looked like two basins put together with blinking lights around its rim. A hatch was ajar and dense smoke was flowing from its opening. Something dark lay prone near the edge of the hatch. Through the smoke it looked like some kind of tentacle.

We could not get any closer as there was no way we could travel across the bog. We were standing at about 25 meters away from this craft taking photo's. I have to say right away that none of these photo's came out. I suspect they were fogged by

radioactivity. Before too long we all felt giddy and were overcome by nausea. My eyes sight began to deteriorate as well so we decided to retreat to what we considered was a safe distance. Moving off it soon became dark and it was not long before we heard the first helicopter. It flew right over our heads. We could not use our radio to communicate with the helicopters as it had failed to work since the explosion. Then another helicopter appeared, then another one, and many more. We

assumed they were all heading for the site we had found in the bog. We thought about returning to the site, but it was dark, our compass was not working, so we decided to wait until morning.

At around 10.00 am the next morning we arrived back at the bog, the exact same place as the day before. There was nothing to be found in the bog, no craft, no nothing. All we could see were peoples footprints and what looked like marks left by the helicopters. Whether the craft sank into the bog or was taken away, I simply don't know.

When our expedition came to an end and we returned to Moscow we were invited, so-to-speak, to a certain institution (KGB regional department). Gathered in a large hall a smiling, grey-haired man appeared, shook hands with everybody and displayed an interest in our survey work. The mood soon changed and the man instructed us all that 'It was reported, the events in the taiga were witnessed by you all...I would like everybody to remember that you saw nothing at all. Absolutely nothing.' We exchanged glances and he added 'All of you, you understand there is such a thing as a state secret. Now each one of you will sign an undertaking that you will divulge nothing. You know the consequences in case you breach...' We signed, there was nothing else we could do. This is why we kept quiet. I don't even know now what it was or if I can tell you about it.

By the way, you should know that members of the expedition are now all dead but a few. They were strong and healthy but now they are dead. In 1992 there were only two of us left. Pavel lives in Leningrad, he was with the expedition. Today I don't know if he is alive or not. I was told by a number of doctors that those members of our expedition who had died suffered from some kind of radiation illness".

Another two witnesses to the event were found living in the village of Topolevka. Anna Egorovna (died aged 82 in 1995) recounted the incident. She was not sure of the precise date but is sure it was the summer. Her grandfather, Philip Ivanovich had gone out into the taiga to hunt (he died before investigators could interview him). 'I went to sleep early as I had to be up early the next morning. During the night I was awoken by a 'boom'. The house began to tremble and I got up, still half asleep trying to understand what was happening. Outside it was like daylight. I was afraid. Before I could go out onto the porch the earth began to shake. I have never been as frightened as this in my life. Looking outside I saw a fiery globe descending over the taiga. Bright sun-like, the object glowed so much it irritated my eyes. The object hit something far off, the wind rose and the everything grew dark again. All that was left to see was a glowing rising aloft in the distance.

I did not sleep for the rest of the night. I was worried about my grandfather but he returned safe and sound. He'd been drinking with his friends and had not seen or heard anything. I did hear rumours that people in the next village (Lukashin Yar) which is about 15 kilometres away, saw the fire in the taiga that night. Then special men from the KGB arrived and warned everyone to keep quiet. So that is the story".

The second witness from the village of Topolevka is Michael Kuzmich, a 79 year-old hunter. He told investigators: "I decided to do some fishing. At that time fish was in plentiful supply. So I thought it would be a good idea to stock up my fish supply. There are plenty of rivers there to fish, so I found a spot, pitched a tent and got out my tackle and reels. It was getting late so I decided to sleep. I ate some fresh fish soup cooked on my camp fire and decided to treat myself to a self-rolled cigarette. I was sitting on the river bank just thinking and looking at the water smoking my cigarette. I suddenly saw a fiery flare and a sound like 'Hu-u-u'. Good god I thought. The sky flared like it was on fire. While I was looking round I heard an explosion and a I was blown over by a huge blast of air. The fir tree tops were crackling with flames running across them. I thought it

was the end, that the Chinese had set off a nuclear bomb. It a moment it seemed to go quiet again with only the taiga on fire. Lucky to be alive I thought I quickly grabbed my tent and fishing tackle and took off. A fire in the taiga can be a terrible thing, I was sure if the flames caught up with me I would be broiled. I just managed to escape with my life."

The last of the four witnesses was located later living in Moscow. His name is Sergey Petrovich M. a 52 year-old aviator. During the 1960s, including 1996, he served with the Soviet Air Force as a technician on aviation equipment at Kalpashevo aerodrome, about 240 kilometres north-west of Tromsø and 350 kilometres south-east of Topolevka. At Kalpashevo there was a special military helicopter squadron as well as a civilian air unit. Kolpashevo is also known as a military unit of space command measuring centre (CMC). Housed here were Mi-4 Hound helicopters and a few heavy cargo Mi-6 Hook ones as well. Kolpashevo had also served as the test space centre for cosmonauts training in specific environmental conditions of the Russian northern region.

Sergey Petrovich M. stated: "I remember that night well. Our military unit was activated by a general alarm. Taking off in the helicopters we flew for a long time over the taiga. We were in the backwoods. There had been a fire in the taiga the day before and even an earthquake. My colleagues were talking about the sky lighting up and a fiery globe

"There was talk in our unit that the saucer was transported to some secret military aerodrome and was under examination by scientists and the military."

descending. I did not see this myself as I was asleep after being on duty.

At long last our helicopter (Mi-4 Hound) began to descend. We jumped out and the man in charge drew us to attention. 'This is a military secret' he told us, and that we would be to blame if anything went wrong. I remember were in a glade and all around were burnt trees and nearby was a large bog. We were lead to the bog and were amazed to see a craft half buried in it. This thing in the bog looked like two pans together with coloured lights around the rim. My colleagues clarified it right away : flying saucer.

Some more helicopters landed with more personnel and one cargo helicopter landed also. The command was given: the saucer had to be hooked on by steel ropes to the belly of the cargo helicopter. We began to construct a device to enable us to lift the saucer out of the bog.

When I got nearer I could see that there was a hatch open. It looked dark inside and steam or smoke was coming out of the hatch. I could also see some kind of flipper leaning out of the hatch. It looked long and tapered and was dark-brown in colour. The craft was big, some 8-10 meters in diameter. It was very streamlined and we had nothing to hook the ropes onto. We made a 'string-bag' type device in order for us to left the object.

There was also a scientist with us. He had come on the cargo helicopter. He kept touching and scraping the hull of the object and then shone his electric torch onto the flipper. He cautiously wrapped the flipper in polyethylene or something similar and handled it very carefully. We were cautioned once again to keep silent about this.

The cargo helicopter rose up and hovered over the saucer and began to lift it. It moved only slowly and at one point I thought I thought it was going to break loose from the ropes. All of a sudden it was out of the bog with slush flowing from it and the cargo helicopter took it away. We were splashed with mud from the bog and were covered from head to foot. The lights from the saucer hung beneath the helicopter were visible in the sky for quite some time.

I don't know anything more about it. There was talk in our unit that the saucer was transported to some secret military aerodrome and was under examination by scientists and the military. It was rumoured that they called it the 'Z Object', in short, classified. It was rumoured also that some bodies were recovered inside it, but this could simply be fairy-tales. I left the military a long time ago now and I have no idea what the object was. I would like to know at some point what it was."

The Tunguska blast in 1908 is still hotly debated even today. Some say it was an astronomical body of some kind, while others state that it was an artificial craft of extraterrestrial origin. the 'Z-Object' or the 'Obsky meteorite' could rank as being even more mysterious than its 1908 counterpart. What was it that shattered the peace and quiet of that June night in 1966? Why was this strange object not destroyed on impact? Officially of course it never happened at all.

Could the 'Z-Object' not have been extraterrestrial at all but rather a Soviet military satellite of some kind with a nuclear reactor on board. In 1965 in Kecksburg, USA and similar incident took place (some thing that this event could also have been a secret Soviet satellite rather than an alien spacecraft). Is it a coincidence for example that the Kolpashevo helicopter unit was part of the space command at the time. This would explain the readiness of the personnel there to deal with such an incident. However, nearly all Soviet satellites are launched in a completely different trajectory and the descent of the 'Z-Object' would therefore not conform to normal Soviet satellite trajectories. No Soviet satellites carry multi-coloured lights around their rim either.

It would be only pure speculation to suggest where the 'Z-Object' eventually went for study. Even in today's modern Russia it can still be dangerous to delve too deeply into such top secret matters. How long the secrets of this and other events will be kept hidden is anyone's guess, but despite the political and economic turmoil in the former Soviet Union, the search for more information continues.



PHILIP MANTLE

is the former Director of Investigations for the British UFO Research Association, is the **MUFON** Representative for England, and is the co-author of : **'BEYOND ROSWELL' & 'WITHOUT CONSENT'**

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Both authors are attempting to obtain more information on UFO activity of any kind in the former Soviet Union. If you can help with such information please contact the authors c/o:

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ABOUT DEATH

My first contact with the NDE (Near Death Experience) was in 1975 when a man from Gloucestershire contacted me. He had experienced a strange thing whilst swimming in his local pool. Suddenly he got cramps and began to sink like a stone. After a few seconds of fighting he reports that an odd sense of calm came over him. No longer did what happened to him matter at all. He was simply floating in the air watching the events unfold around him as if they were a film show. Then a long telescope appeared in front of him and he found himself being sucked towards it. It was as if he were being pulled into the tube and heading for the stars.

It was a weird sensation. But, as quickly as it started, the peace and tranquillity was over. A terrible thumping on his chest brought him back into his body and he was being forced to expel water from his lungs by someone who had dragged him from the pool. As he said to me, this was an act of rescue that he should have been hugely grateful for. He was not. All he could feel was sadness that he had not been allowed to go down that telescope tube and out into the cosmos. Although this was the first time I had come upon a real life NDE - a term I only discovered a year or two later when Raymond Moody

published his best-selling book 'Life After Life' - it was not my first encounter with this sort of thing. In fact, to a point, it had happened to me. This was in January 1970 when I was 19 and at university. It was a day that changed my life and probably ensured that I still explore these strange byways of the universe. My grandmother, whose psychic abilities as I grew up in the Lancashire hill village of Stacksteads first attracted me to the paranormal, had just died. She did so right in front of me at my home in Manchester, where she had been visiting for Christmas. The tragedy hit me hard. Other things were occurring in my life at the time leading me on a path of destiny that gradually unwound. This coming on top of them was one disaster too many. I suspect I came close to a nervous breakdown. Whether that is relevant or not, I do not know. But I do know that as I stayed at a friend's house before the funeral I awoke in the middle of the night and was floating above the bed. This was a room I had never slept in before, but I saw it clearly. The feeling of being there staring down at myself was stunning and terrifying. But it was so real it is impossible to describe. The fear acted like a shot of adrenaline. As if I was at the end of a huge elastic band I snapped back into my body and sat up staring around wide awake. No way could I get back to sleep that night. Of course, my relativity physics professor told me at university when I mentioned this, you were dreaming. Perhaps, I told him. But I was not convincing myself.

As time has gone by I have been told of these OOBES (out of body experiences) many times. I feel that I can understand them better having experienced one. I have talked at length on the matter to the sceptical psychologist, Sue Blackmore, whose work I admire. She, too, has had an OOBES and thinks from this that they are hallucinatory. But her

experience was not like mine. It was during an experiment after drugs had been in the air. It was a self induced visionary experience. Mine, like most NDEs (which are really OOBES that go one step further) occur spontaneously, unexpectedly and not as visions. I have had floating dreams where I go out of the body. I suspect most people have.

These are utterly different from my one spontaneous OOBES. I suspect that there are two kinds of out of body state and the one that precedes an NDE is not of the kind that Sue Blackmore speaks. I feel she is indeed researching dreams and visions.

One thing that I have noticed is that there is a gradation from the simple OOBES such as my own to the more complex form that occurs usually in a stress situation. "Emmerdale" actor Johnny Caesar told me how he was electrocuted by his guitar whilst doing a stage show at Aviemore in Scotland. He went OOBES, had the same sensations of calmness as reported by the man in the pool and also regretted being brought

JENNY RANGLES

back. But he saw no tunnel. His was, in effect, a stage two OOBIE rather than a full blown NDE, even though he was technically near death at the time.

I do not believe that these are hallucinations or visions. I think they involve real projections of consciousness beyond the body. In this I know I am in dispute with Sue Blackmore but I base it on cases that I have investigated. Biologist Lyall Watson told me of how he was in a bus crash in Africa and from his position trapped in the wreckage observed a young boy in a precarious spot. If the bus toppled over, as it easily might, the boy would be crushed. As soon as rescuers got to him he urged them to free the boy. They did but were amazed by how Watson saw this thing. He could only have done so - as he believed was the case - if he had floated above the road and seen the crash from that elevated vantage point. This was where he felt his mind go. But his body and eyes were in the wreck incapable of seeing the trapped youth.

Hallucinations struggle to accommodate the way in which a five year old boy, born with a heart defect due to his mother becoming ill during pregnancy, could see the doctors insert a plastic valve during surgery to save his life. The boy never physically saw the valve but he described it perfectly. I spoke to the theatre nurse and the doctor. They confirmed this. By chance I was sharing a side room with his mother at Arrowe Park Hospital in Birkenhead. By this fortune I came upon this amazing case.

So I do have reason to feel that in this OOBIE/NDE phenomenon we are dealing with more than just a dream or vision. But what are we dealing with? Does some part of us literally float free of the physical constraints of our body? Is this mind, spirit or soul? Does it prove life after death? Well, no, it does not do this because none of these experiences occur at a point after death. The most graphic only occur near death (hence the term used) and some - such as my own - at a point where no physical threat was evident at all. Indeed, there are reliable cases of NDEs occurring when a person was never in a position to die; although they were in some sort of trauma (for instance - one man fell off a cliff into soft snow and was uninjured but had an NDE as he fell believing that he was about to die).

However, for me the real fascination developed when I realised that there was a whole category of NDEs that were not even being reported in that context. In fact they were being described by the witness as an alien contact! Bizarre as this sounds, it is not absurd. There are parallels when you think about it. The NDE that goes all the way involves a person feeling strangely detached, floating out of the body, seeing a light and heading

towards it where they have telepathic contact with wise vaguely seen beings. They convey philosophical data and the witness returns - finding themselves back at the spot from which they left, such as their seat in a car that has just crashed into a wall. But many alien contacts unfold like this. They are simply interpreted differently. The witness may be in their car when they drive into a bank of mist. They feel strangely detached (we even have a name for this - the Oz Factor). Then, not uncommonly, they report sensations of floating. There have even been cases where they have OOBIE states and see their bodies still in the car. Next they may see a beam of light - often tube like - and can report being sucked up this. They may then have telepathic contact with wise beings who spout philosophy and who eventually return them back from whence they came. They wake up

in their car, perhaps a few minutes later, perhaps skewed off the road. But do they feel they have nearly died and gone to heaven because of a close call on the highway? No - they - or the investigators who take over the case - make assumptions that this was an abduction.

We can at least ask the question as to whether the process of investigation that follows - the questions, hypnosis, assumptions placed on the case - contribute to the way in which its form develops? There are several cases which have come my way where it is almost impossible to make a proper judgement between whether the events described are an NDE or an abduction. An example is a stage magician who nearly died after a bad reaction to the anaesthetic in a Middlesbrough dental practice. They floated out of their body and through the ceiling. But they did not go to heaven. Instead they saw a UFO, entered this, had contact with aliens who talked about the future of the earth and urged the man to fight his way past small ugly aliens who would like demons seek to possess his body before he could get back. He succeeded in getting home, just as the dentist was giving him CPR and fearing the worst.

This is by no means the only such case of an NDE/abduction hybrid and it teaches important lessons. What does it all mean? Are abductions really near death experiences? Are NDEs really abductions that are misperceived? You could argue either or both. Or, of course, the real conclusion might be that there is an ineffable experience at a level of the mind we cannot fully appreciate. When we enter that state of consciousness certain phenomena are 'real'

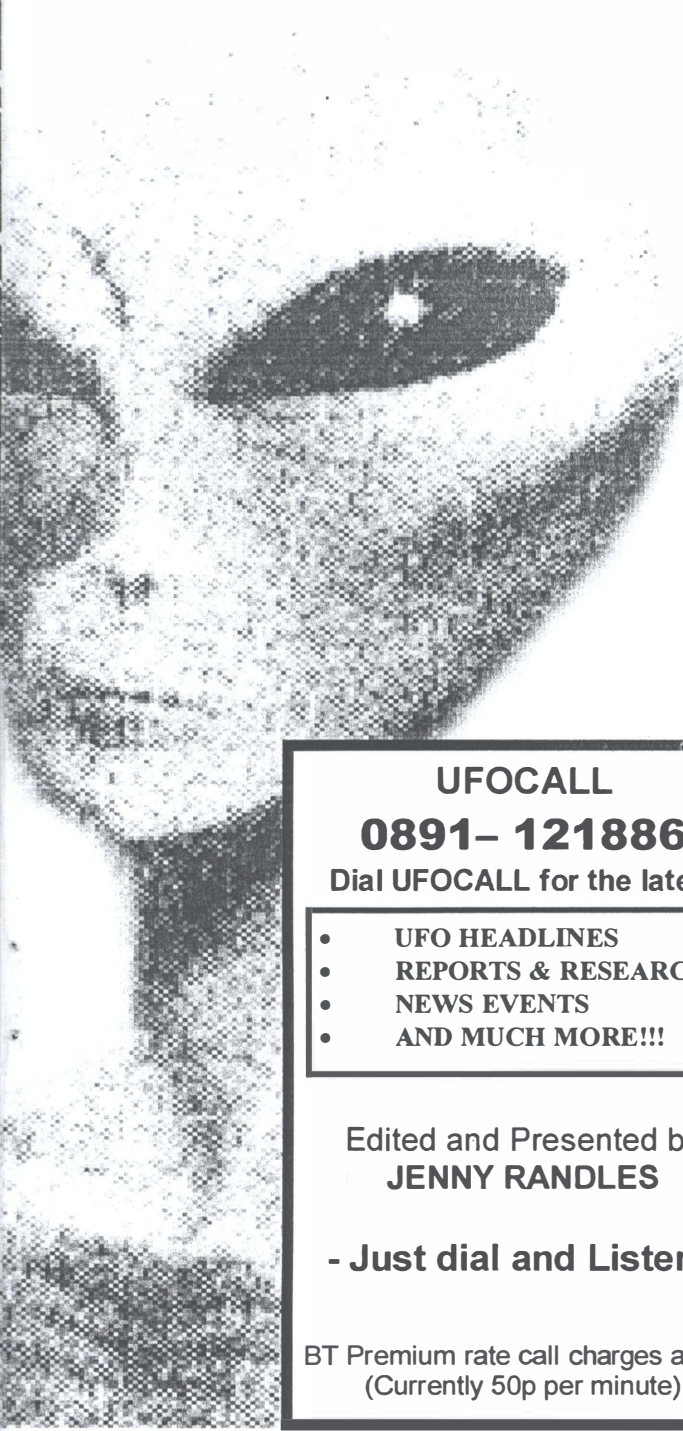
and so commonly described - the Oz Factor, the OOBIE state, the contact with wise entities. As the true essence of this experience lies beyond the capacity of the human mind to fully comprehend what do we do? We do what we always do in such circumstances. We interpret the events in context and the context gets interwoven with the experience to create a memory that is told to others. That memory is a hybrid of incomprehensible reality and



Jenny Randles is an internationally respected researcher and author, writing on all areas of extraordinary phenomena including UFOs and the field of paranormal research over the last twenty-five years. She has lectured around the world and contributed to numerous television and radio documentaries and is also a consultant to the ITV series *Strange But True*. Jenny Randles' numerous books include: 'Abduction', 'The Pennine UFO Mystery', 'Star Children', 'Mind Monsters' and more recently 'Something In the Air' and 'The Afterlife' co-authored with Peter Hough. Jenny is also a Consultant to *Strange Daze*.

assumptions based on context. As a result some follow the path of an NDE - others that of an abduction. Which occurs in any one case may depend on simple things like whether your car slew's off the road and hits a tree, thus creating the prospect of an actual brush with death, or merely ends up in a patch of mud seemingly without any risk to life and limb. Or whether you have heard of NDEs or abductions. Or who chances along to investigate the case - psychologist Ima Gonner, or UFOlogist A Leon Kontak. I suspect we are the architects of much of what we study and until we recognise that and take a step back we are going nowhere fast - except of course exactly where we want to go and so make very sure we end up.

So, we do need to look carefully at both abductions and NDEs and seek out the links between them. I think that they are more real than we might well expect and that by this route may lie the truth about both of these seemingly disparate phenomena.



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Science from NEWTON

.....the other one. Dave.

Welcome to my first column as a writer for Strange Daze, rather than editor of the magazine. I shall be criticising and commenting upon the wild and wacky fields of UFOlogy and astronomy from the rather more comfortable chair of Science Editor, or some such grandiose title.

Challenge to Magonia.

First things first, let's go back to last issue and the Hutchison Effect, Albert Budden's challenge to Magonia. Albert was good enough to send me three videotapes dealing with the Hutchison Effect, which I viewed with interest (before it turned to dismay). Unfortunately for Albert, I wasn't impressed. The footage shows a variety of objects apparently shooting upwards from the floor, spinning and moving around, as well as other activities, but not in

sufficient detail and with enough background details to convince me that this is indeed a new or genuine phenomenon. I remain open minded but unconvinced until better evidence becomes available. The video footage of the effect just wasn't what I expected – it was poorly shot and amateurish. So where do we stand with the Hutchison Effect? Too early to make a judgement. We need to see more, and better.

This however was not good enough for Albert. The merest suggestion that I wasn't won over entirely resulted in Albert withdrawing his permission for me to use any more of his material in Strange Daze.

(however, I am happy to say that Albert has changed his mind on this decision as readers will have noticed: Ed).

He had some pretty choice things to say about Strange Daze, too and this is a great pity, since I maintain that his "Allergies and Aliens" electrical hypersensitivity theory has great potential and if it is taken up by independent researchers I believe it is a testable theory, which is what we badly need in the borderland subjects.

Elsewhere in the Universe...

The top science story of 1998 was that the universe is not only expanding (discovered by Edwin Hubble in the first half of this century) but that the expansion appears to be getting faster. The observations come from The Supernova Cosmology Project, based at Berkeley Lab and headed by Saul Perlmutter of the Physics Division, and the High-z Supernova Search Team led by Brian Schmidt of Australia's Mount Stromlo and Siding Spring Observatories. Essentially, their conclusion is that rather than gradually slowing down after the big bang, as the galaxies move further apart a repulsive force (Einstein's *Cosmological Constant* Λ) starts to kick in and force the galaxies apart against the force of gravity. The result of this cosmic antigravity force is that the expansion of the universe is gradually accelerating.

Some of us might be familiar with the simple models in cosmology and the search for *dark matter* which has been a big topic within astronomy for many years now. If there is more than a certain amount of matter in the universe the force of gravity will eventually halt the expansion of the universe and it will re-collapse into a *big crunch*. If there is less than a certain amount of matter, then the force of gravity will never be strong enough to halt the expansion from the initial big bang, and the universe will expand forever. In this case, the universe will gradually slow down because of gravity, but will never slow down enough to stop expanding and re-collapse. There have been good theoretical reasons for thinking that the universe should be on the critical point between open and closed universes, and astronomers have been searching for the postulated non-visible 90% of the mass of the universe that would close the universe.

However, the new results throw cosmology into turmoil. It appears that the universe is not decelerating at all, but as

time advances it is accelerating. The result? Just as with a standard open universe, the universe will end in a heat death at some distant time in the future, when all of the stars burn out. But in the new accelerating universe, we will have less company to share that fate with. So is this result true? Can these observations be trusted? It's probably too early to say yet.

Genetically Modified Madness

The big stink in the media these days is genetically modified ("Frankenstein") foods. It seems that the media will pick on anything in the hunt for a good story, to scare the public into possibly buying more newspapers. All of our food is pretty much genetically modified anyway; centuries of cross breeding and selective breeding have produced fruits, crops and animals different to those growing wild. This is in order to produce better yields, improved taste, appearance, and so on. Splicing in a petunia gene or a cauliflower complex is just a little more advanced, that's all. You're not going to wake up one morning with a cauliflower where your head should be. No doubt the same people complaining about GM foods are the same people who complain about pesticides in the environment, the Newbury bypass and would happily see us all living naturally – i.e. in caves wearing bearskins.

Well sorry, but I want fluoride in my water, petrol in my engine and my children immunised against such wonders of nature as TB, whooping cough and smallpox. I hope you will all consign these dreadfully ignorant scare stories about GM foods to the bin – along with the other classics, like eating beef making you brain go spongy, microwave ovens giving you cancer and catching VD from toilet seats.

The Night Sky: Spring 1999

The Stars

Spring is a time of fast moving change amongst the stars. As the Earth moves around the Sun in its near-circular orbit, the stars seem to set roughly 4 minutes earlier each night. During Spring though, as the days get longer and the Sun sets later each night, the stars *appear* to set much earlier each night. Very quickly, the Winter constellations of Orion, Gemini and Canis Major (containing Sirius, the brightest star in the sky) make way for the spring constellations of Leo, Virgo and Bootes. (Contrast this with the Autumn, when the Sun sets earlier each night; this seems to counterbalance the fact that the stars set 4 minutes earlier each night, making the Summer constellations linger.) Bootes contains the bright orange star Arcturus, the brightest star in the Northern half of the sky. Spring is a good time to observe the saucepan shape of Ursa Major, which is high overhead. By following the

curve of the "saucepan handle" downwards, you first come to Arcturus and then, closer to the horizon, Spica the brightest star in Virgo. For serious astronomers, Spring is a time of galaxy observing. When we look at this area of sky we are looking out of the plane of the Milky Way and into the void beyond. Without the stars, dust and gas of the Milky Way to obscure our vision, we can see thousands of other island universes beyond, many tens or hundreds of millions of light years away. Many of these galaxies are spirals just like the Milky Way.

Because the Milky Way is rather sparse in this part of the sky, the sky is fairly devoid of stars. The prominent shape of Leo is the starry highlight of the Spring, with the surrounding constellations of Cancer, Hydra, Coma and Virgo being harder to trace out. For UFO spotters, the bright stars to watch out for are Arcturus and Spica (previously mentioned), Vega (rising up from the North East) and Capella (near the northern horizon).

The Planets and Moon

Far and away the brightest planet in the sky is Venus, currently the bright Evening Star visible in the west after sunset. At magnitude -4, you simply can't miss it. Venus moves quite quickly through the sky, as those people who watched it during February (when it made a close approach to Jupiter, but now hidden in the Sun's glare) will know. But it continues to move away from the Sun as we see it and will light up the western evening sky into June.

The only other bright planet of note is Mars, low in the sky in the constellation of Virgo. At magnitude -1.6 when it reaches opposition on April 24, it outshines all of the stars in the sky with its ruddy light, without being spectacular.

The Moon is full on the following dates this Spring:

March 31, April 30, May 30, June 28.

New Moon occurs on the following dates:

March 17, April 16, May 15, June 13, July 13.

The Sun

Our star goes through a 22 year cycle of activity which affects the number of sunspots seen and other solar activity. It will reach maximum activity in 1999/2000, so there should be plenty of sunspots to see for those observers interested in photographing or looking at the solar surface. The safest way to do this is by projecting an image of the sun onto a piece of white card held up behind the telescope or binoculars. Never look at the Sun directly through a telescope or binoculars, unless it has been fitted with the proper filters. If in doubt, don't look - use eyepiece projection with a piece of card instead.

Meteors

Spring is not a good time usually for recognized meteor showers, although sporadic meteors can appear at any time. Things pick up with the Lyrid meteor shower (April 19 - 25, maximum April 22) which put on fine displays in the years 1803, 1922 and 1982.

The eta-Aquarids peak on May 4, but the bright moon will interfere with observing. Prime meteor observing season doesn't arrive until late July, with the Aquarids (three different streams) the Capricornids and then the Perseids (which peak on August 13).

Satellites

Of the many thousands of pieces of hardware and junk in orbit, the brightest are Mir, the Space Shuttle and the Iridium satellites (the \$5.5 billion fleet of Motorola satellites). Iridium flares aren't just brightening the sky for visual observers - there are concerns that Iridium's transmissions leak into a frequency band reserved for radio astronomy near 1612 megahertz, swamping the faint radio signals from cool dying stars and stellar nurseries. Even when the satellites aren't in service, they broadcast a constant homing signal that Michael Davis of the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico calls a "dial tone in the sky." As the International Space Station gets built, it too will become brighter and brighter as it passes through the sky. The Russian space station Mir will be visible over the UK on the following dates:

Mornings May 6 - May 16

Evenings May 17 - May 27

For accurate predictions of the times, and other astronomical events, call the Astronomy and Space telephone newsline:

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DAVE NEWTON BSc

Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and President of the Sunderland Astronomical Society. The founder editor (*for he's a jolly good fellow*) of **Strange Daze**, he now prefers to do something grown up and produces The North East Observer for the local astronomical community. When he's not doing astronomy or changing nappies, he works in Newcastle for the Overseas Branch of a government agency. Still plays a mean guitar.

DARK STAR FALLING

The 28th. January was a black day for the contractors of the DarkStar High Altitude Endurance Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (HAEUAV), Lockheed Martin and Boeing. The Pentagon announced (perhaps "whispered" would be a more appropriate term given the lack of publicity) its decision to cancel the DarkStar side of the programme.

The HAEUAV programme was begun with the intention of providing "an advanced airborne reconnaissance system comprised of two complementary air platforms ... Global Hawk and DarkStar"¹.

High Altitude Endurance Unmanned Aerial Vehicles are designed to fill the gap left by the retirement of the SR-71 (Blackbird), and to provide surveillance over a wide area². HAEUAVs offer a clear advantage over other surveillance systems in that, unlike spy satellites they are not restricted to following any one specific flight path and, unlike manned aircraft, such as the U-2, do not present any risk to pilot life.³

In a 1997 statement made by Charles Heber Jr. (Director of DARPA-Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency) to the Senate Armed Services Committee, DarkStar was described as featuring "an incorporation of low observables, or stealth, and is optimised for a moderate

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endurance, high altitude reconnaissance mission in which ensured, survivable coverage is more important than range and endurance ... it can operate at just over a 45,000 foot altitude for more than 8 hours. Physically it is a little over half the span and a third of the length of the Global Hawk aircraft."⁴

Global Hawk on the other hand, which is being developed by Teledyne Ryan Aeronautical & Raytheon/E-Systems, "is considered the workhorse of the HAEUAV mix. It is a conventionally designed, wing/body/tail, jet-powered aircraft optimised for payload, range and endurance ... capable of operating at 65,000 foot altitude with up to 42 hours of endurance ... Its overall size is comparable to a U-2."⁵

From this statement it is clear that the Pentagon knew from the very beginning what the limitations of DarkStar would be, and the part it would play as *half of a two platform programme*. Yet the Pentagon gave as their reason for cancelling DarkStar, that Global Hawk had outperformed it in recent tests by being able to fly further⁶ (!). Call me suspicious but this seems to be a pretty poor excuse for cancelling half of a multimillion-dollar programme (20 million dollars of the money for DarkStar remains, which is now to be spent on Global Hawk). Rumours abound on Internet mailing lists that both Lockheed Martin and Boeing have been told to retain the staff who worked on DarkStar for the Pentagon's next planned project. *I just wonder what the Skunk Works is working on now...*

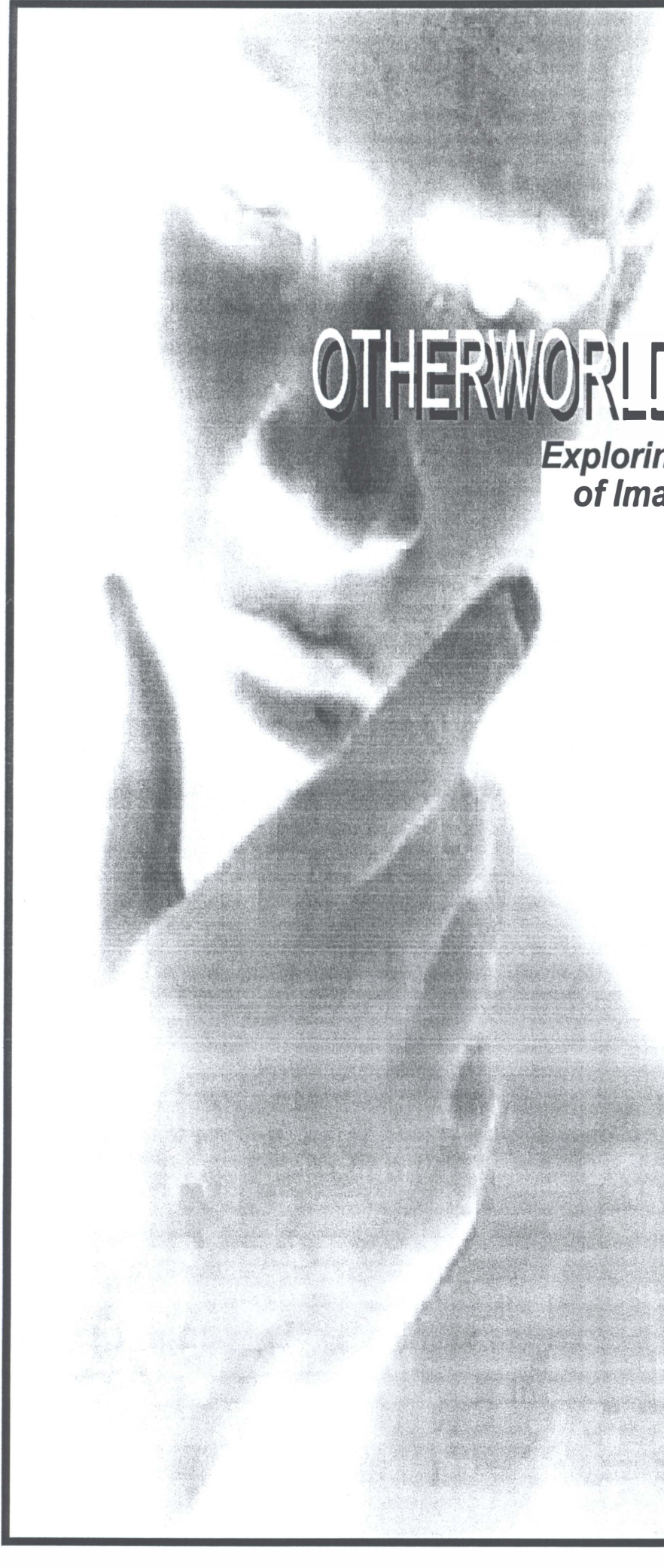
KATE TAYLOR:

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GLOBAL HAWK RISING



**Royal Society of Arts
London**

1st-2nd May 1999

An extraordinary two-day
conference was organised by:

The Consciousness Connection

(Founders/Directors, Paul Devereux,
Charla Devereux & Trish Pfeiffer)

OTHERWORLD REALITY

***Exploring the Ontological Status
of Imaginal Consciousness.***

***THE Conference for the
Millennium-A Review &
Personal Perspective by***

Gloria Heather Dixon

The Conference was
designed to address
the nature of mental
realms, that appear

to be involved with
extraordinary human
experiences. These
encompassed encounters with
other worldly beings, visions,
near death experiences, the
abduction phenomenon, lucid
dreaming, remote viewing and
hallucinogenic trance.

Conference objectives were to
approach the issues of whether
these mental states were simply
functions of the brain or were
these imaginal realms glimpses
of other realities?

*Amongst an impressive array of speakers was
Dr. Jacques Vallee, who provided a powerful
influence for me to travel to London for the
weekend to attend this conference.*

Unfortunately prior to the conference I heard

through a colleague that Dr. Vallee may not be able to attend and although this was a great disappointment to me, I decided to journey to London in the hope that this would not deflect from the overall ideas of this unique conference. I travelled to London on warm Friday afternoon ready for an early start on the Saturday morning. I was not disappointed even with the absence of one of the great consciousness researchers of our time...

I had a slightly late start on the Saturday morning due to a lengthy cocktail hour on the Friday evening, which extended into the early part of Saturday a.m. and I arrived in time to hear the latter part of Paul Devereux's introductory paper on :

'The Imaginal in Ancient Persian Religion and Modern Experience'

coined as the 'imaginal consciousness'. Paul Devereux, an internationally respected researcher, is specifically known for his long-term research and investigation into 'Earthlights' and has written twenty books to date ranging from academic to popular, on archaeological and consciousness research themes and geophysical anomalies. His introductory talk explored the term 'imaginal' as describing a particular state of consciousness understood by the mystics of Ancient Persia and how this state occurs in people independently of any cultural context. This imaginal state can manifest in many ways with examples of lucid dreaming, alien abduction, out of body experiences, visions and all aspects of mystical experiences. Paul Devereux asked if these 'imaginal states' are a product of neurophysiology or if there is another objective, non-consensus level of reality involved with these experiences.

Listening to the last few minutes of his fluent lecture, I really wished I had been there at the beginning!

Michael Grosso presented the first paper entitled:

Death and the City of the Imagination: William Blake and Otherworld Realities.

He holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Columbia University and is chairman of the Philosophy and Religion Department at New Jersey City University. Using the work of William Blake he discussed the reality status of imagination and the brain processes involved in this and went on to address how we can begin to understand the nature of imaginal states and their possible connection to the idea of life after death. His inspirational work on consciousness and spirituality encompasses miracles, the paranormal, UFOs, soul-making, the afterlife and all related topics. Profound and thought provoking questions emerged from his paper asking the question that if 'consciousness' escapes death can it survive, enabling the human personality to exist in outside of physical death? Does the intrinsic nature of thought exist outside of time and space? Is imagination more important than reason because imagination permeates our waking life and the content of our minds consists of constant images? He discusses the idea that Jesus is the imagination and that

this gives us a way to see things with visionary intensity so that we 'converse with paradise'. In his concluding comments he postulates the idea of imagination putting us in touch with another realm of possibilities. He deconstructs Christianity and talks about our own personal God-religion.

This was a deeply philosophical look at the otherworlds that we all inhabit from time to time, and what they mean in terms of the imagery that pervades our consciousness. Is it real and does this subjective world of profound images and experiences mean that it is not real or is this a doorway that is opened to us from other worlds?

The next speaker was Dr. Ian Marshall, a psychiatrist and psychotherapist, who studied mathematics, philosophy and psychology at Oxford University, and medicine in London. He and his wife, Danah Zohar have published several books with a forthcoming publication for early 2000 entitled **Spiritual Intelligence**.

Dr. Marshall's paper was entitled :

The Otherworld and the Physical World: Some Unifying Perspectives

and covered the ideas that neurology and physics could possibly give some explanation of mental phenomena. As brain activity during lucid dreaming or trance resembles that of waking consciousness, except for reduced response to sensory input this gives each person a private, subjective Otherworld. He asks if there can be other forms of input to this state, which would give a shared, objective Otherworld. This was an extremely thoughtful paper addressing the issue of personal Otherworlds, which encompass many altered states of consciousness, such as dreams, lucid dreaming, imagination, trance, ESP, creativity. He discussed our perceptions of the world and that fact that artists and creative people are able to access otherworlds more easily because of their inherent natural ability to create images. He went on to talk about the fact that technology has generated far more knowledge about how the brain works and discussed the waking consciousness, the dreaming consciousness where lucid dreaming can occur, which created a personal otherworld where the ego is not present.

After lunch and with my interest heightened by the morning's presentations I returned to listen to Charles Laughlin, Ph.D. a Professor of Anthropology at Carleton University, in Ottawa. Dr. Laughlin is trained in both ethnology and in the neurosciences and his paper was entitled:

Imagination and Reality: On the Relations Between Myth, Consciousness, and the Quantum Sea.

During his lecture, Dr. Laughlin explored the correlation between mythic stories and aspects of reality based on his research into different cultures of human races and their characteristics and discussed the idea of how myths and areas of reality can appear to overlap and that without the

imagery sustained through myth, the actual nature of reality would be more difficult to interpret. He also asks whether reality itself is imagined and if an inherent faculty of the brain produces a cognitive world in a way which conforms to our reality. He explores universal cosmology and the idea that, intuition is, knowing the truth already, by recalling what our species has always known through the collective unconsciousness.

The next speaker of the afternoon was Alan Worlsey, a psychologist, who has conducted research into consciousness during sleep and particularly lucid dreaming. His Paper was entitled:

Lucid Encounters in the Imaginal State: Controlled Exploration in the Realm of the Metachoric.

This was of great interest to me particularly as he was conveying the idea of convincing imaginal experiences in the form of dreams, out of body experiences, near death experiences, alien abduction, which occur unexpectedly to people, who are disturbed by the content of these images and feel that these images and experiences may be real.

Alan Worsley explained the term 'lucid dreaming' as being aware of the fact that you are dreaming, whilst actually dreaming, and that the dreamer can actually direct the course of their dream with corresponding muscular activity relevant to the content of the dream. In 1975 at Hull University, Alan Worlsey made the first communication from dream state by coded eye movement signals, recorded by Keith Hearne on EEG polygraph. In the 1980s he was the subject and experimenter at St. Thomas's Hospital in London with Dr. Peter Fenwick using conscious dream control to study correspondence between reported dreamed events and actual physiological activity. He discussed these experiments and the results and made some important points. Brain waves were monitored during these experiments and when he signalled that he was in a lucid dreaming state, there was no obvious difference in the brainwaves before or after lucid dreaming. However, there was a recording of muscle activity during lucid dreams. There were also many areas of his awareness of lucid dreaming where he was able to change the course of the dream by imagining another scene and he discussed the idea of lucid dreaming being similar to near death experiences. He was able to introduce things into the dream with the senses being aware of the interaction of the dream thereby providing a portal for astral travel. Tactile sensations during lucid dreaming give an added reality, which makes lucid dreaming appear as though it is a real experience.

These pre-arranged experiments were able to give the opportunity of observing and guiding the subjective content of lucid dreaming in order to monitor brainwaves and any changes. The experiments suggest that induced alternate realities can be as amazing and real as voluntary cases.

The last speaker of Saturday afternoon was to have been Dr. Jacques Vallee, but due to unforeseen circumstances, he was unable to journey from America to present his

paper. Therefore Stanley Krippner, Professor of Psychology at Saybrook Graduate School in San Francisco delivered a synopsis of Jacques Vallee's paper in his own rather eloquent style.

Jacques Vallee has conducted major research into consciousness and also UFOs and related phenomena for many years. Born and educated in France he holds a master's degree in astrophysics and obtained his doctorate in computer science at North Western University in the USA where he was a close associate of Professor Allen Hynek the US Air Force scientific consultant on the UFO problem. He has written extensively on scientific and UFO studies and his diaries covering many areas of paranormal research have been published in his book **Forbidden Science**.

*(I remember meeting Dr. Vallee in 1992 when he was speaking at a conference in Manchester. He was compiling his diaries at that time for publication) I highly recommend this book to readers and also his trilogy on the UFO subject, **Dimensions, Confrontations and Revelations**. For me, Jacques Vallee remains one of the greatest researchers into human issues and consciousness, of our time).*

Dr. Vallee's paper was entitled:

The Rise of the Replicants: Four Scenarios Impacting consciousness in the Years 2000-2025:

and explored the ideas of reframing future scenarios around fundamental issues asking the important question on whether advanced and futuristic technical structures such as the quantum computer challenge the very idea of what it means to be human? Can the new communications media continue to grow without a restructuring of social systems and what are the implications? Individual and society's survival will be very different in the next century as will new spiritual movement based on the Web. He points out that these will be as dangerous as they are enchanting, but they cannot be ignored, otherwise humanity could be trapped in visionary fantasies with which they have had no previous experience.

Stanley Krippner introduced the paper with Dr. Vallee's thought provoking words '*There is another world, but it is inside this one*'. The paper continued, addressing the issues of alternative universes, UFOs and near death experiences and what we have learned. He looked at the idea of extraordinary human experiences, including UFOs, abduction, near death experiences, remote viewing and many related topics and posits the idea that these have been packaged and used by unscrupulous people which has culminated in shocking problems at times and uses the example of the Heavens Gate tragedy and his book entitled **Messengers of Deception** to illustrate his views here. Dr. Vallee suggests that there should be new high standards of research implemented in the study of all extraordinary phenomena in order to leave us with better models for further study.

He discussed the profound impact that the Internet has had



on our understanding of consciousness and talks about *nature* as a framework for understanding the human consciousness and asks what it actually means to be human. Ethical issues arise in addressing the issue of our use of cyberspace and the on-going experiments in cloning and genetic engineering. He posits the idea that an international framework should set moral guidelines, as we advance in these fields of research. The idea that the Internet has created huge problems was explored specifically looking at the problem of computer games and the line between otherworlds and this world, which produces a desensitisation to violence. He also postulates an interesting theory that if these otherworlds are socially constructed, maybe they disappear when there is no one to interact with them?

The idea of near death experiences being cultural in their images and that they vary in imagery depending on whether they are experiences from Japan, India or the USA etc, so this posits the theory that there is a degree of social construction to these particular experiences.

There was so much to absorb from this paper presented so persuasively by Stanley Krippner, that I was glad it was the end of this day's lectures, and I left the Royal Society of Arts with my head buzzing and headed back to my hotel nearby looking forward to a drink or two and dinner with a colleague that evening. I needed the drink in order to clear my mind and grasp the idea of how little I understood about many things at a deep philosophical level and indeed about how we perceive 'reality'. I decided to get back into the 'real' world at least for Saturday night and lapse in and out of one or two gin and tonics.

SUNDAY

found me packing my overnight bags, and as I never travel light, this was no mean feat. I hoped I would not miss too many minutes of the first lecture of the day! Meanwhile I had to pay my hotel bill, leave my bags with the luggage porter and head off to my second day of lapsing in and out of consciousness.

I arrived at the RSA and Charla Devereux smilingly informed me that, day two of the conference was already underway...oh well, I hadn't missed it

all! I quietly made my way into the conference auditorium to hear Peter Rojcewicz presenting his paper entitled:

Beware the Physical in the Material: Imaginalia, Folk Belief, and the Eclipse of the Literal.

Peter Rojcewicz Ph.D. is a folklorist and Chairs the Interdivisional Liberal Arts at The Juilliard School, New York City. He also lectures and teaches at the C.G. Jung Foundation in New York and was invited to speak on the nature of imaginal phenomena in India by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama.

(By very strange synchronicity while writing this paragraph, I happened to tune into Radio 4 and heard Jeremy Paxton introducing his guest...the Fourteenth Dalai Lama!!)

I have used all the information from the abstract of Dr. Rojcewicz's paper here as I had made very few notes.

His paper covered the idea that imaginal phenomena are archetypal images, self-originating and manifestations of the psyche and that all realities, physical, social, mythic and religious, existed originally as an image and are the fundamentals of consciousness itself. He looked at the idea that our century has lost contact with the 'soul' and therefore our extraordinary encounters with a variety of entities returns the psyche to its non-human state in order for us to be able to cut through these images to other realities beyond the parameters of what we understand as our physical world. It appears that the ego must undergo these encounters with non-human entities or abductions to otherworlds of the soul where **we ourselves** are images and this way we can recover our ability to see these images as true realities. The way in which we imagine the world provide us with images whereby we view ourselves, and we realise that we embody these many characteristics of the life of images within us. By engaging imaginal persons inherent in all people, things and events, we realise that the greater part of the soul is outside the body and thereby have destroy the illusion of the world as without psychic life.

The next speaker of Sunday morning was Richard Rudgley based at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford and undertaking research into the prehistoric and ancient use of psychoactive plants. He has also written several books including the acclaimed **'The Alchemy of Culture: Intoxicants in Society'**. The title of his presentation was

The Ethnography of the Imaginal,

where he discusses the pioneering work of Henri Corbin, who used the term imaginal to give a cultural translation of Iranian ideas on the ability of imagination. He uses the American Indians and Melanesian (SW Pacific) cosmologies to illustrate the idea of the imaginal world with emphasis on shamanism and ritual activities using psychoactive plants and their role in entering altered states of consciousness and compares them with our own cultural beliefs. He also discusses how the imaginal consciousness shows great differences in many and various native cultures and that our own Western culture's denigration of this human faculty becomes the exception in human

cultural experience.

He went on to explore altered states of consciousness induced by hallucinogenic drugs and described this state as 'a package holiday on the way to the imaginal'! Aborigines would eat a type of palm plant and this would give them a twelve-hour journey into otherworlds. These native tribes would often escape to the mountains after taking very potent hallucinogenic mushrooms in order to gain access to the imaginal, which sometimes created experiences, which mirrored the near death experience.

Evidence has been found of human use of psychoactive drugs 13,000 years ago in Chile, where many plants were found in the remainder of a hut there and the effects would have been far more potent than today. Shamans of the primitive religions were very aware of the toxic effects of tobacco and would experiment with the damaging effects of tobacco to the physical body by taking it in large amounts. They would seek near death experiences and insight into the origins of disease through these experiments.

The third speaker of the morning was Karl Jansen, *who was to be the highlight of this conference for me*. He is a medical doctor and psychiatrist and holds a PhD in clinical pharmacology, focusing on the mind/brain interface. He trained in psychiatry at Maudsley and Bethlem Royal hospitals and is a member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. His paper was entitled:

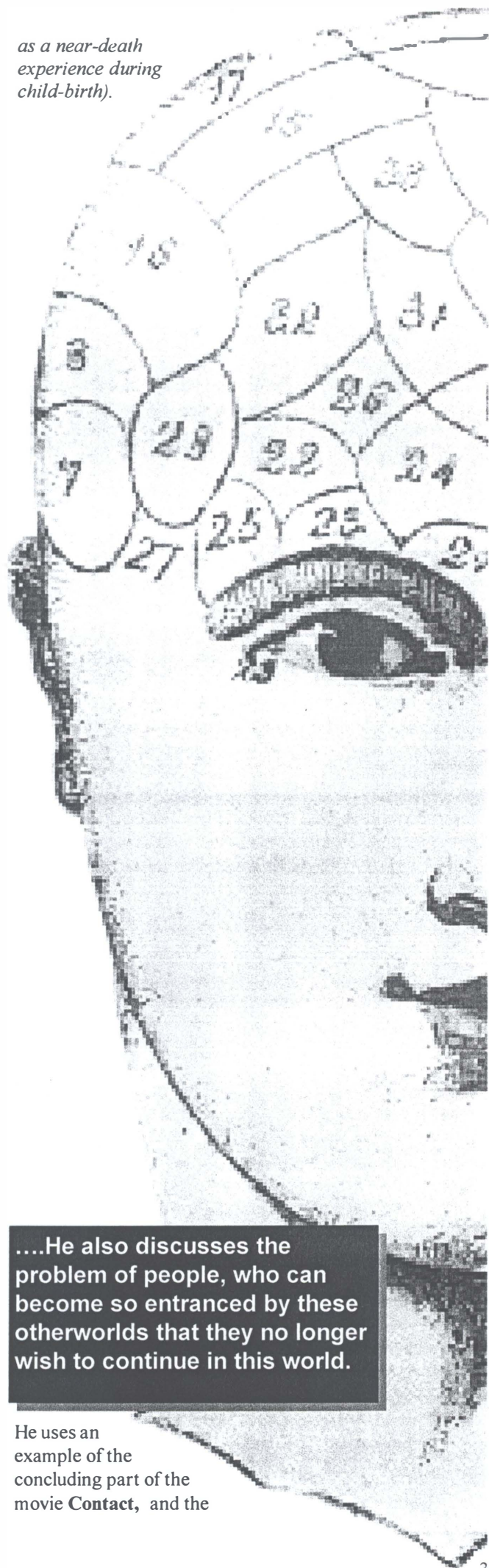
Ketamine and the Near-Death Experience

and a synopsis of his paper-encompassed research and explanations on Ketamine, a dissociative anaesthetic, which can produce trips to other realities, identical to near-death experiences. These findings cover events in the brain itself and the possibility that the brain could act as a transceiver showing energy fields beyond the brain as features of the mind. He used an analogy here of a television which converts waves in the air into a visible and audible drama and likens it to the drug Ketamine re-tuning the brain in order for it to gain access to certain fields which are usually inaccessible. Does this re-tuning open doors to other realms which are always there rather than producing these realms, just as one channel's broadcast continues when we change channels, although we cannot see or hear it?. Therefore the effect on the mind of adding Ketamine to the brain focuses on the significant questions of the relationship with the Universe, Spirit, Mind and Body.

Dr. Jansen introduced his lecture with the words of Albert Einstein... *'Imagination is more important than knowledge'* and asked if Ketamine re-tunes the brain to quantum frequencies? He refers to altered states of consciousness as meaning **altered states of being**, and discusses the near-death experiences as occurring in all sorts of circumstances often when one is not actually in a life threatening situation.

(This is interesting, as it is something I have also found in my research into near-death experiences, both on a personal level and through an account of what was viewed

as a near-death experience during child-birth).



....He also discusses the problem of people, who can become so entranced by these otherworlds that they no longer wish to continue in this world.

He uses an example of the concluding part of the movie *Contact*, and the

experiences of Jody Foster's portrayal of the Scientist searching for signs of extraterrestrial life, as symbolising the idea of these altered states of being. The imagery described by some people using Ketamine are very reminiscent of near-death reports which involve travelling through a tunnel, brilliant lights, beings of light with descriptions of eternity and multiple universes where time and space are but an illusion. He also posits the idea that some of these reports may be symbolic of the birth process when we emerged from a tunnel into the light so that maybe some near-death experiences may be a near-birth experience. He discusses new data, which shows that the foetus can hear and remember sounds heard at 20 weeks. These experiences are recorded by people as so real, that they genuinely believe that they have not been hallucinating, but that these events actually happened. He asks therefore if the brain is re-tuned to a different reality? He also discusses the problem of people, who can become so entranced by these otherworlds that they no longer wish to continue in this world.

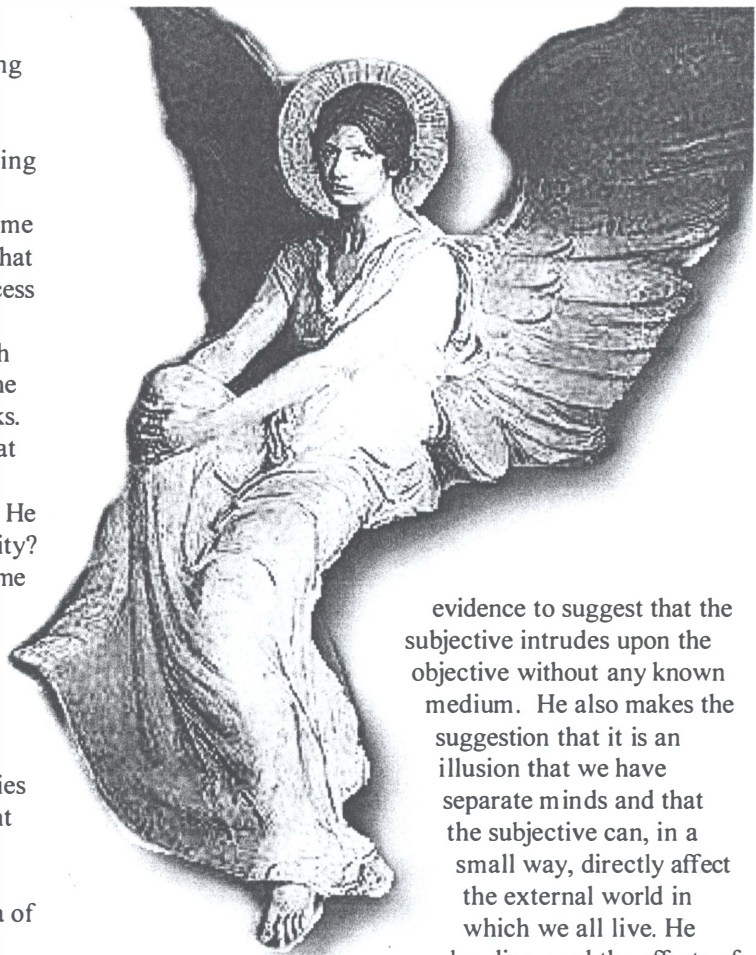
Dr. Jansen then proceeded to discuss the possible idea that ketamine acts as a **mental modem** connecting the mind to the quantum universe and talks about Bell's Theorem which involves a hyper-space where all realities exist at a single point. Ketamine can be an ambivalent drug used in small amounts where it can induce either positive or negative effects, and can be used in small amounts to ease birth and death, which reflects the idea of conflicting forces. He feels that reports of ketamine related near-death experiences involving eternity and infinity demand better explanations than simply being dismissed as hallucinations and discusses the new realities that arise from the depths of the mind when we are cut off from this world and enter a transpersonal field.

Dr. Jansen's extraordinary lecture evoked some real thinking processes about the nature of the near-death experience and whether ketamine, which appeared to induce these altered states, could possibly enable us to access otherworld realities that are always with us, OR were these images hallucinations caused by the effects of ketamine on the brain?

Sunday afternoon opened with the final speaker of the day **Dean Radin, PhD**, who has studied telecommunications and also conducted experimental research into psychic phenomena. He has also been President of the Parapsychological Association and received many research awards. He is author of **The Conscious Universe** and has contributed articles and technical reports to numerous journals. Dr. Radin works at a major Silicon Valley think tank on theoretical and technological aspects of psychic phenomena. His paper was entitled :

Experimental Evidence for an Intersubjective Reality.

Dr. Radin opened his presentation exploring the external world of physics and the internal world of the psychic where the objective and subjective blur in a mirage effect. He discussed experiments in telepathy with a degree of accuracy where just chance was just not a good enough explanation for the results.. He also discussed the strong



evidence to suggest that the subjective intrudes upon the objective without any known medium. He also makes the suggestion that it is an illusion that we have separate minds and that the subjective can, in a small way, directly affect the external world in which we all live. He also discussed the effects of Lunar/psychic effects, which

produced interesting results during an experiment in a casino.

The concluding chapter to this conference was in the form of a Panel Discussion, introduced and led by Stanley Krippner PhD, who is a Professor of Psychology at Saybrook Graduate School in San Francisco. He is a leading researcher and teacher into the field of consciousness studies. Within his many books and articles, he has investigated developments in consciousness research, education and healing. He began with some introductory remarks regarding the system, in which we lived, states of mind and body bringing in the interesting observation that women find it easier to transcend the boundaries of otherworlds, which invoked some interesting feedback later into the panel discussion. He looked at the issues of transplant and how it has been recorded that the recipient of the organs have had memories belonging to the deceased donor suggesting that everything contains memories.

He also explored the out-of-body state and suggested that during these experiences you are not actually leaving your body, but that it is an 'inward travel' where you are actually moving further in space without boundaries almost like the space of eternity. In discussing dreaming Dr. Krippner indicated that dreams do occur without rapid eye movement (REM) being evident. A significant point was raised with regard to Alzheimer's Disease and as this was a disease of the brain could there be a survival of the personality?

For the last part of the afternoon a Panel Debate took place consisting of all the Conference speakers. Most of the questions were written questions by members of the audience and presented by Dr. Krippner to the Panel. Some of the questions were deeply philosophical and sometimes esoteric in nature occasionally making it difficult for the speaker to answer, but nevertheless they stirred up great debate and contributed an ever wider measure of understanding to this amazing conference.

My own thoughts and feelings after two days of absorbing the sheer scope of ideas, research and theories about

the human consciousness,

imaginal states

and otherworld

realities,

were

complex.

In many

ways it

made

me realise

how very

little I understood

about the nature of

reality and what it actually

means to be aware and conscious,

in other words the idea of just 'being' and

what this means for each of us

individually . Does the essence of our

being equate to our soul, which can exist

within us and yet independently of the

physical body connecting to otherworlds?

Are these altered states of being allowing

us access to other realities, or are they

solely faculties of the brain under

extraordinary circumstances which occur

during dreaming, trance states,

hallucinations induced by drugs, life

threatening situations perceived or

otherwise, or are they part of a collective

unconsciousness?

With our ever increasing access to information via the internet and ever more sophisticated technology, this can provide us with the unique opportunity to reach an understanding of what it means to be human. In our approach to the Millennium and all that this will symbolise for us in terms of our social structures, our technology, our interaction

with nature (and more

significantly at a

deeper

philosophical

level of

exploring

the meaning

of life itself)

I believe

that this

conference and

hopefully others

to follow in

the year 2,000

addressing these

powerful human issues

should inform the public in a way that has not been Initiated before outside of the

Academic community. I congratulate

Paul and Charla Devereux and Trish

Pfeiffer on their tremendous vision and

vital insight into organising a conference

of this calibre, and I thank them for their

sheer efforts in running one of the best

organised conferences I can remember

attending.

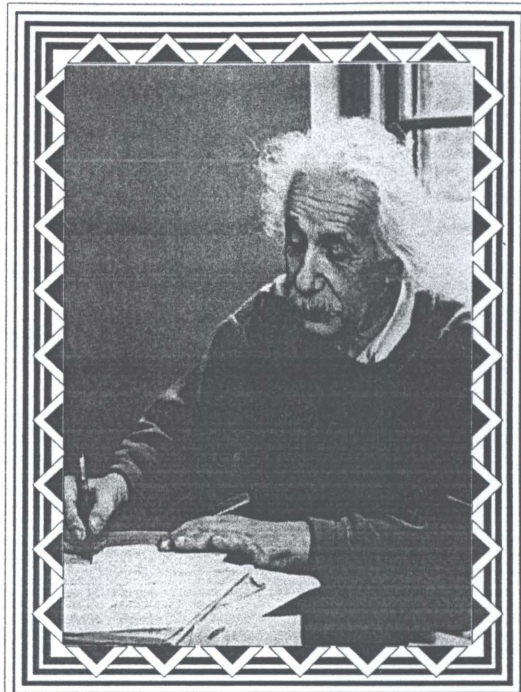
GLORIA HEATHER DIXON

References: Conference Proceedings
Paper Abstracts and Biographies
A synopses of notes taken by me
from the Papers presented by the Speakers.

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and never looked back.

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